

For as it would ill become me to be vain, indiscreet, or a fool.

So, were there a patch set on learning, to see him in a school⁴:

But *omne bene*, say I; being of an old father's mind,
Many can brook the weather, that love not the wind.

Dull. 'You two are book-men; Can you tell by your wit,
What was a month old at Cain's birth, that's not five
weeks old as yet?

Hol. Dictynna⁵, good man Dull; Dictynna, good
man Dull.

Dull. What is Dictynna?

Nath. A title to Phœbe, to Luna, to the moon.

Hol. The moon was a month old, when Adam was
no more;

And raught not⁶ to five weeks, when he came to five score.
The allusion holds in the exchange.

Dull. 'Tis true, indeed; the colluſion holds in the
exchange.

This stubborn piece of nonsense, as somebody has called it, wants
only a particle, I think, to make it sense. I would read:

And such barren plants are set before us, that we thankful should be
(Which we of taste and feeling are) for those parts, that do fructify in
us more than he.

Which in this passage has the force of *as*, according to an idiom of our
language, not uncommon, though not strictly grammatical. What follows
is still more irregular: for I am afraid our poet, for the sake of his rhyme,
has put *be* for *him*, or rather *in him*. If he had been writing prose, he
would have expressed his meaning, I believe, more clearly than—*that do*
fructify in us more than in him. TYRWHITT.

I have adopted Mr. Tyrwhitt's emendation. Some examples con-
firming Dr. Johnson's observation may be found at the end of *the Comedy*
of Errors. MALONE.

⁴ *For as it would ill become me to be vain, indiscreet, or a fool;*

So, were there a patch set on learning, to see him in a school.] The
meaning is, to be in a school would as ill become a patch, or low fellow.
as folly would become me. JOHNSON.

⁵ *Dictynna,*] Old Copies—*Diētisma*. Corrected by Mr. Rowe.

MALONE.

⁶ *And raught not*] i. e. *reach'd* not. STEEVENS.

⁷ *The allusion holds in the exchange.*] i. e. the riddle is as good when
I use the name of Adam, as when you use the name of Cain. WARB.

Hol.

Hol. ³ Comfort thy capacity! I say, the allusion holds in the exchange.

King. And I say, the pollution holds in the exchange; for the moon is never but a month old: and I say beside, that 'twas a pricket that the princess kill'd.

Hol. Sir Nathaniel, will you hear an extemporal epitaph on the death of the deer? and, to humour the ignorant, I have * call'd the deer the princess kill'd, a pricket.

Nath. *Perge*, good master Holofernes, *perge*; so it shall please you to abrogate scurrillity.

Hol. I will something affect the letter: for it argues facility. *The praiseful princess pierc'd and prick'd a pretty pleasing pricket;*

Some say, a fore; but not a fore, till now made fore with shooting.

The dogs did yell; put in a fore, then forel jumps from thicket;

Or pricket, fore, or else forel; the people fall a hooting.

If fore be fore, then L to fore makes fifty fores; O fore L⁹!
Of one fore I an hundred make, by adding but one more L.

Nath. A rare talent!

Dull. If a talent be a claw, look how he claws him with a talent.

Hol. This is a gift that I have, simple, simple; a foolish extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas, apprehensions, motions, revolutions: these are begot in the ventricle of memory, nourished in the womb of *pia mater*, and deliver'd upon the mellowing of

* — *I have*—] These words were inserted by Mr. Rowe. MALONE.

³ *The praiseful princess*—] This emendation was made by the editor of the second folio. The quarto, 1598, and folio, 1623, read corruptly—*praisful*. MALONE.

The ridicule designed in this passage may not be unhappily illustrated by the alliteration in the following lines of *Ulpian Fulwell*, in his Commemoration of queen Anne Bullayne, which makes part of a collection called *The Flower of Fame*, printed 1575:

"Whose princely praise hath pearst the pricke,

"And price of endless fame, &c." STEEVENS.

9 — *O fore L!*] In the old copies—*O forell*. The correction was suggested by Dr. Warburton. The rhyme confirms it. The allusion (as Dr. Warburton observes) is to L being the numeral for fifty.

A deer during his third year is called a forel. MALONE.

occasion: but the gift is good in those in whom it is, Kate, and I am thankful for it.

Nath. Sir, I praise the Lord for you; and so may my parishioners; for their sons are well tutor'd by you, and their daughters profit very greatly under you: you are a good member of the commonwealth.

Hol. Mebercle, if their sons be ingenious, they shall want no instruction: if their daughters be capable¹, I will put it to them: But, *vir sapit, qui pauca loquitur*: a soul feminine saluteth us.

Enter JAQUENETTA and COSTARD.

Jaq. God give you good morrow, n after person².

Hol. Master person,—*quasi* perf-on³. And if one should be pierced, which is the one?

Cost. Marry, master school-master, he that is likest to a hoghead.

Hol. Of piercing a hoghead! A good lustre of conceit in a turf of earth; fire enough for a flint, pearl enough for a swine: 'tis pretty; it is well.

Jaq. Good master parson, be so good as read me this letter; it was given me by Costard, and sent me from Don Armatho: I beseech you, read it.

¹ — if their daughters be capable, &c.] Of this *double entendre*, despicable as it is, Mr. Pope and his coadjutors availed themselves, in their unsuccessful comedy called *Three Hours after Marriage*. STEEV.

Capable is used equivocally. One of its senses was *reasonable*; endowed with a ready capacity to learn: So, in *King Richard III*;

“O 'tis a parlous boy,

“Bold, quick, ingenious, forward, *capable*.”

The other wants no explanation. MALONE.

² — *master person*.] Thus the quarto, 1598, and the first folio. The editor of the second folio, not understanding the passage, reads—*parson*, which renders what follows nonsense. *Person*, as Sir William Blackstone observes in his *Commentaries*, is the original and proper term; *persona ecclesiæ*. So, in *Holinshed*, p. 953, (the quotation is Mr. Steevens's,) “Jerom was vicar of Stepnie, and Garard was *person* of Honie-lanc.” It is here necessary to retain the old spelling. MALONE.

³ — *quasi* perf-on.] I believe we should write the word—*perf-one*. The same play on the word *pierce* is put into the mouth of *Falstaff*. STEEV.

The words *one* and *on* were, I believe, pronounced nearly alike, at least in some counties, in our author's time; (see vol. i. p. 122, n. 5.) the quibble, therefore, that Mr. Steevens has noted, may have been intended as the text now stands. In the same style afterwards Moth says, “Offer'd by a child to an old man, which is *wit-old*.” MALONE.

Hol.

*Fauste, precor gelidâ³ quando pecus omne sub umbrâ
 sedet, —and so forth.. Ah, good old Mantuan! I may
 prize thee as the traveller doth of Venice;*

—*Vinegia, Vinegia,*

Cbi non te vede, ei non te pregia⁴.

Old Mantuan! old Mantuan! Who understandeth thee
 not, loves thee not.—*Ut, re, sol, la, mi, fa.*—Under par-

³ *Fauste, precor gelidâ* [&c.] Though all the editions concur to give this speech to sir Nathaniel, yet, as Dr. Thirlby ingeniously observed to me, it is evident it must belong to Holofernes. The Curate is employed in reading the letter to himself; and while he is doing so, that the stage may not stand still, Holofernes either pulls out a book, or, repeating some verse by heart from Mantuanus, comments upon the character of that poet. Baptista Spagnolus (surnamed Mantuanus, from the place of his birth) was a writer of poems, who flourished towards the latter end of the 15th century. THEOBALD.

The *Eclogues* of Mantuanus the Carmelite were translated before the time of Shakspeare, and the Latin printed on the opposite side of the page. STEEVENS.

From a passage in Nashe's *Apologie of Pierce Pennilesse*, 1593, the *Eclogues* of Mantuanus appear to have been a school-book in our author's time: "With the first and second lease he plaies very prettillie, and, in ordinarie terms of extenuating, verdicts *Pierce Pennilesse* for a grammar-school wit; saies, his margine is as deeply learned as *Fauste precor gelida*." A translation of Mantuanus by George Turberville was printed in 8vo. in 1567. MALONE.

⁴ —*Vinegia, Vinegia,*

Cbi non te vede, ei non te pregia.] Our author is applying the praises of Mantuanus to a common proverbial sentence, said of Venice. *Vinegia, Vinegia! qui non te vedi, ei non te pregia.* O Venice, Venice, he who has never seen thee, has thee not in esteem. THEOBALD.

The proverb stands thus in Howell's *Letters*, book i. sect. 1. l. 36.

Venetia, Venetia, cbi non te vede, non te pregia,

Ma cbi t' ha troppo veduto, te dispregia.

Venice, Venice, none thee unseen can prize;

Who thee hath seen too much, will thee despise.

The players in their edition, have thus printed the first line:

"*Vemchie, viencha, que non te unde, que non te perreche.*" STEEVENS.

The editors of the first folio here, as in many other instances, implicitly copied the preceding quarto. The text was corrected by Mr. Theobald.

Our author, I believe, found this Italian proverb in Florio's *Second Frutes*, 4to. 1591, where it stands thus:

"*Venetia, cbi non ti vede, non ti pretia;*

"*Ma cbi ti vede, ben gli costa.*" MALONE.

don,

don, fir, what are the contents? or, rather, ~~as I have~~
says in his—What, my soul, verses?

Nath. Ay, fir, and very learned.

Hol. Let me hear a staff, a stanza, a verse; *Lege, domine.*

Nath. If love make me forsworn⁵, how shall I swear
to love?

Ah, never faith could hold, if not by beauty vowed!
Though to myself forsworn, to thee I'll faithful prove;
Those thoughts to me were oaks, to thee like oaks
bowed.

Study his bias leaves, and makes his look thine eyes;
Where all those pleasures live, that art would com-
prehend:

If knowledge be the mark, to know thee shall suffice;
Well learned is that tongue, that well can thee
commend:

All ignorant that soul, that sees thee without wonder:
(Which is to me some praise, that I thy parts admire;)
Thy eye Jove's lightning bears, thy voice his dreadful
thunder,

Which, not to anger bent, is musick, and sweet fire⁶.
Celestial as thou art, oh pardon, love, this wrong,
That sings heaven's praise with such an earthly tongue!

Hol. You find not the apostrophes, and so miss the ac-
cent: let me supervise the canzonet. Here are only num-
bers ratify'd⁷; but, for the elegance, facility, and
golden cadence of poesy, *caret*. Ovidius Naso was the
man: and why, indeed, Naso; but for smelling out the

⁵ *If love make me forsworn, &c.*] These verses are printed with some variations in a book entitled the *Passionate Pilgrim*, 8vo. 1599. MALONE.

⁶ — thy voice his dreadful thunder,

Which, not to anger bent, is musick and sweet fire.] So, in *Antony and Cleopatra*:

“ — his voice was *propertied*

“ As all the *tuned spheres*, and that to friends;

“ But when he meant to quail, and shake the orb,

“ He was *as rattling thunder*.” MALONE.

⁷ *Here are only numbers ratify'd;*] These words and the following lines of this speech, which in the old copy are given to Sir Nathaniel, were rightly attributed to Holofernes by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

odoriferous

odon, ~~flowers~~ flowers of fancy, the jerks of invention? *Imitation*, nothing: so both the hound his master, the ape his keeper, the tired horse⁸ his rider. But, damosella virgin, was this directed to you?

Jaq. Ay, fir, from one Monsieur Biron⁹, one of the strange queen's lords.

Hol. I will overglance the superscript. *To the snow-white hand of the most beauteous Lady Rosaline.* I will look again on the intellect of the letter, for the nomination of the party writing¹ to the person written unto:

Your Ladyship' in all desired employment, BIRON.

Sir Nathaniel, this Biron is one of the votaries with the king; and here he hath framed a letter to a sequent of the stranger queen's, which, accidentally, or by the way of progression, hath miscarry'd.—Trip and go, my sweet²; deliver this paper into the royal hand of the king; it may concern much: Say not thy compliment; I forgive thy duty; adieu.

Jaq. Good Costard, go with me.—Sir, God save your life!

Cost. Havewith thee, my girl. [*Exeunt COST. and JAQ.*]

Nath. Sir, you have done this in the fear of God, very religiously; and, as a certain father saith—

⁸ —the tired horse] was the horse adorned with ribbands,—the famous *Bankes's horse*, so often alluded to. Lilly, in his *Mother Bomie*, brings in a *Hackneyman* and Mr. *Halfpenny* at cross-purposes with this word: "Why didst thou boare the horse through the eares?" "—It was for tiring." "He would never tire," replies the other. FARMER.

Again, in *What you will*, by Marston, 1607:

"My love hath tyr'd some sidler like Albano." MALONE.

⁹ *Ay, fir, from one Monsieur Biron,*] Shakspeare forgot himself in this passage. Jaquenetta knew nothing of Biron, and had said just before that the letter had been "sent to her from Don Armatho, and given to her by Costard." MASON.

¹ —writing] Old Copies—written. Corrected by Mr. Rowe. The first five lines of this speech were restored to the right owner by Mr. Theobald. Instead of *Sir Nathaniel*, the old copies have—*Sir Holgerfenes*. Corrected by Mr. Steevens. MALONE.

² Trip and go, my sweet;] Perhaps originally the burthen of a song. So, in *Summer's Last Will and Testament*, by T. Nashe, 1600:

"Trip and go, heave and hoe,

"Up and down, to and fro." MALONE.

Hol.

Hol. Sir, tell not me of the father, I do fear your-
able colours³. But, to return to the verses, Did they
please you, Sir Nathaniel?

Nath. Marvellous well for the pen.

Hol. I do dine to-day at the father's of a certain pu-
pil of mine; where if, before repast⁴, it shall please you to
gratify the table with a grace, I will, on my privilege
I have with the patents of the, for said child or pupil,
undertake your *benvenuto*; where I will prove those verses
to be very unlearned, neither favouring of poetry, wit,
nor invention: I beseech your society.

Nath. And thank you too: for society (saith the text)
is the happiness of life.

Hol. And, certes, the text most infallibly concludes it.
—Sir, [*to Dull.*] I do invite you too; you shall not say
me, nay: *pauca verba*. Away; the gentles are at their
game, and we will to our recreation. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

Another part of the same.

Enter BIRON, with a paper.

Biron. The king he is hunting the deer; I am coursing
myself: they have pitch'd a toil; I am toiling in a pitch⁵;
pitch, that defiles; defile! a foul word. Well, Set thee
down, sorrow! for so, they say, the fool said, and so
say I, and I the fool. Well proved, wit! By the lord,
this love is as mad as Ajax: it kills sheep; it kills me, I
a sheep: Well proved again on my side! I will not love:
if I do, hang me; i'faith, I will not. O, but her eye,—
by this light, but for her eye, I would not love her; yes,
for her two eyes. Well, I do nothing in the world but
lie, and lie in my throat. By heaven, I do love: and it

³ — *colourable colours.*] That is, specious, or fair seeming appear-
ances. JOHNSON.

⁴ — *before repast,*] Thus the quarto, 1598. Folio—*being repast.*

MALONE.

⁵ *I am toiling in a pitch,*] Alluding to lady Rosaline's complexion,
who is through the whole play represented as a black beauty. JOHNSON.

hath

hath taught me to rhyme, and to be melancholy; and he is part of my rhyme; and here my melancholy. Well, the hath one o' my sonnets already; the clown bore it, the fool sent it, and the lady hath it: sweet clown, sweeter fool, sweetest lady! By the world, I would not care a pin, if the other three were in: Here comes one with a paper; God give him grace to groan! [*gets up into a tree.*]

Enter the King, with a paper.

King. Ah me!

Bir. [*aside.*] Shew, by heaven!—Proceed, sweet Cupid; thou hast thund'rd him with thy bird-bolt under the left pap:—I'faith secrets.—

King. [*reads.*] *No sweet a kiss the golden sun gives not
To those fresh morning drops upon the rose,
As thy eye-beams, when their fresh rays have smote
The night of dew that on my cheeks down flows⁶:
Nor shines the silver moon one half so bright
Through the transparent bosom of the deep,
As doth thy face through tears of mine give light;
Thou shin'st in every tear that I do weep:
No a'rop but as a coach doth carry thee,
So ridest thou triumphing in my woe;
Do but behold the tears that swell in me,
And they thy glory through my grief will show:
But do not love thyself; then thou wilt keep
My tears for glasses, and still make me weep.
O queen of queens, how far dost thou excel!
No thought can think, nor tongue of mortal tell.—
How shall she know my griefs? I'll drop the paper;
Sweet leaves, shade folly. Who is he comes here?*

[*steps aside.*]

Enter LONGAVILLE, with a paper.

What, Longaville! and reading! listen, ear.

Bir. Now, in thy likeness, one more fool, appear! [*aside.*]

⁶ *The night of dew that on my cheeks down flows:* This phrase, however quaint, is the poet's own. He means, *the dew that nightly flows down his cheeks.* Shakspeare, in one of his other plays, uses *night of dew* for *dewy night*, but I cannot at present recollect, in which.

Long. Ah me! I am forsworn.

Bir. Why, he comes in like a perjure, wearing a-
pers⁷. [aside.]

King. In love, I hope⁸; Sweet fellowship in shame!

Bir. One drunkard loves another of the name. [aside.]

Long. "Am I the first that have been perjur'd so?" [aside.]

Bir. I could put thee in comfort not by two, that I
know: [aside.]

Thou mak'st the triumvir, the corner-cap of society,
The shape of love's Tyburn that hangs up simplicity.

Long. I fear, these stubborn lines lack power to move:
O sweet Maria, empress of my love!

These numbers will I tear, and write in prose.

Bir. O, rhimes are guards on wanton Cupid's hose:
Disfigure not his slop⁹. [aside.]

Long. This same shall go.

Did not the heavenly rhetoric of thine eye [reads.]

('Gainst whom the world cannot hold argument,)

Persuade my heart to this false perjury?

Vows, for thee broke, deserve not punishment.

A woman I forswore; but, I will prove,

Thou being a goddess, I forswore not thee:

My vow was earthly, thou a heavenly love;

Thy grace being gain'd, cures all disgrace in me.

Vows are but breath, and breath a vapour is:

Then thou, fair sun, which on my earth dost shine,

Exhal'st this vapour vow; in thee it is:

If broken then, it is no fault of mine;

7 — he comes in like a perjure, &c.] The punishment of perjury is to wear on the breast a paper expressing the crime. JOHNSON.

⁸ In love, I hope; &c.] In the old copy this line is given to Longaville. The present regulation was made by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

⁹ O, rhimes are guards on wanton Cupid's hose:

Disfigure not his slop.] I suppose this alludes to the usual tawdry dress of Cupid, when he appeared on the stage. In an old translation of Casa's *Galatea* is this precept: "Thou must wear no garments, that be over much daubed with garding: that men may not say, thou hast *Ganimedes* hosen, or *Cupid's doublet*." FARMER.

Slops are large and wide-kneed breeches, the garb in fashion in our author's time. THEOBALD.

*By m. broke, What fool is not so wise,
To lose an oath to win a paradise?*

Bir. [aside.] This is the liver vein², which makes flesh
a deity;

A green goose, a goddess: pure, pure idolatry.
God amend us, God amend! we are much out³ the way.

Enter DUMAIN, with a paper.

Long. By whom shall I send this?—Company! stay.
[*stepping aside.*

Bir. [aside.] All hid, all hid³, an old infant play;
Like a demy-god here sit I in the sky,
And wretched fools' secrets heedfully o'er-eye.
More sacks to the mill! O heavens, I have my wish;
Dumain transform⁴: four woodcocks in a dish⁴!

Dum. O most divine Kate!

Bir. O most prophane coxcomb! [*aside.*

Dum. By heaven, the wonder of a mortal eye!

Bir. By earth she is not, corporal; there you lie⁵. [*aside.*

The old copy reads—*shop*. The emendation was made by Mr. Theobald. *Guards* have been already explained. See p. 66, n. 4. MALONE.

¹ *To lose an oath to win a paradise?* The *Passionate Pilgrim*, 1599, in which this sonnet is also found, reads—*To break an oath*. But the opposition between *lose* and *win* is much in our author's manner.

MALONE.

² — *the liver vein,*] The liver was anciently supposed to be the seat of love. JOHNSON.

³ *All hid, all hid,*] The children's cry at *bide and seek*. MUSGRAVE.

⁴ — *four woodcocks in a dish.*] A *woodcock* was a proverbial term for a silly fellow. See p. 290, n. 6. MALONE.

⁵ *By earth she is not, corporal; there you lie.*] Mr. Theobald says that Dumain had no post in the army, and therefore reads—*she is but corporal*, understanding the latter word in the sense of *corporeal*; but it should be remembered that Biron in a former scene, when he perceives that he is in love, exclaims—

And I to be a *corporal* of his field,

And wear his colours——!

Why then may he not in jest apply that appellation to another, which he has already given to himself? He only means by the title, that Dumain is one of Cupid's *Aid-du-camps*, as well as himself.

If *corporal* is to be considered as an adjective, Theobald's emendation appears to me to be absolutely necessary. MALONE.

Dum.

Dum. Her amber hairs for foul have amber quoted⁶.

Bir. An amber-colour'd raven was well not^d. [*aside.*]

Dum. As upright as the cedar.

Bir. Stoop, I say;

Her shoulder is with child.

[*aside.*]

Dum. As fair as day.

Bir. Ay, as some days; but then no sun must shine.

[*aside.*]

Dum. O that I had my wish!

Long. And I had mine!

[*aside.*]

King. And I mine too, good Lord^a

[*aside.*]

Bir. Amen, so I had mine: is not that a good word?

[*aside.*]

Dum. I would forget her; but a fever she
Reigns in my blood⁷, and will remember'd be.

Bir. A fever in your blood! why then incision
Would let her out in sawcers; Sweet misprision! [*aside.*]

Dum. Once more I'll read the ode that I have writ.

Bir. Once more I'll mark how love can vary wit. [*aside.*]

Dum. On a day, (*alack the day!*)

Love, whose month is ever May,

Spy'd a blossom, passing fair,

Playing in the wanton air:

Through the velvet leaves the wind,

All unseen, 'gan passage find⁸;

That the lover, sick to death,

Wish'd himself the heaven's breath.

⁶ — for foul have amber quoted.] Quoted here, I think, signifies, marked, written down. So, in *All's well that ends well*:

"He's quoted for a most perfidious slave."

The word in the old copies is *coted*; but that (as Dr. Johnson has observed, in the last scene of this play,) is only the old spelling of *quoted*, owing to the transcriber's trusting to his ear, and following the pronunciation. To *cote* is elsewhere used by our author, with the signification of *overtake*, but that will by no means suit here. MALONE.

⁷ — but a fever she

Reigns in my blood,] So, in *Hamlet*:

"For, like the hectic, in my blood he rages." STEEVENS.

⁸ — 'gan passage find;] The quarto, 1598, and the first folio, have — *can*. Corrected by Mr. Theobald. In the line next but one, *Wish* (the reading of the old copies) was corrected by the editor of the second folio.

MALONE.

Air.

Mr. Quoth he, *thy cheeks may blow ;*
But would I might triumph so !
But alack, my hand is sworn⁹ ;
Ne'er to pluck thee from thy thorn¹ :
Vow, alack, for youth unmeet ;
Youth so apt to pluck a sweet.
Do not call it sin in me,
That I am forsworn for thee :
Thou for whom *Jove* would swear²,
Juno but an *Eriopoe* were ;
And deny himself for *Jove*,
Turning mortal for thy love.—

This will I send, and something else more plain,
 That shall express my true love's fasting pain³.

O would the king, Biran, and Longaville,
 Were lovers too ! Ill, to example ill,
 Would from my forehead wipe a perjur'd note ;
 For none offend, where all alike do dote.

Long. Dumain, [advancing.] thy love is far from charity,
 That in love's grief desir'st society :
 You may look pale, but I should blush, I know,
 To be o'er-heard, and taken napping so.

King. Come, sir, *[advancing.]* you blush ; as his, your
 case is such ;
 You chide at him, offending twice as much :
 You do not love Maria ; Longaville
 Did never sonnet for her sake compile ;
 Nor never lay his wreathed arms athwart
 His loving bosom, to keep down his heart.

9 — *my hand is sworn,*] A copy of this sonnet is printed in *England's Helicon*, 1614, and reads :

" But, alas ! my hand hath sworn."

It is likewise printed as Shakspeare's, in *Jaggard's Collection*, 1599.

STEEVENS.

1 — *from thy thorn :*] So Mr. Pope. The original copy reads *thence*.

MALONE.

2 — *Jove would swear,*] *Swear* is here used as a dissyllable. Mr. Pope, not attending to this, reads—*ev'n*] *ove*—, which has been adopted by the subsequent editors. MALONE.

3 — *my true love's fasting pain.*] *Fasting* is *longing*, *hungry*, *wanting*. JOHNSON.

I have been closely shrowded in this bush,
 And mark'd you both, and for you both did blush.
 I heard your guilty rhimes, observ'd your fashion;
 Saw sighs reek from you, noted well your passion:
 Ah me! says one; O Jove! the other cries;
 One, her hairs were gold⁴, crystal the other's eyes:
 You would for paradise break faith and troth; [to Long.
 And Jove, for your love, would infringe an oath.
 [to Dumain.

What will Birón say, when that he shall hear
 Faith infringed, which such zeal did swear⁵?
 How will he scorn? how will he spend his wit?
 How will he triumph, leap, and laugh at it?
 For all the wealth that ever I did see,
 I would not have him know so much by me.

Bir. Now step I forth to whip hypocrisy— [desce.
 Ah, good my liege, I pray thee, pardon me:
 Good heart, what grace hast thou, thus to reprov:
 These worms for loving, that are most in love?
 Your eyes do make no coaches⁶; in your tears
 There is no certain princess that appears;
 You'll not be perjur'd, 'tis a hateful thing;
 Tush, none but minstrels like of sonneting.
 But are you not ashamed? nay, are you not,
 All three of you, to be thus much o'er-shot?
 You found his mote; the king your mote did see;
 But I a beam do find in each of three.
 O, what a scene of foolery have I seen,
 Of sighs, of groans, of sorrow, and of teen!

4 One, *her hairs*—] The folio reads—*On her hairs* &c. I some years ago conjectured that we should read, *One, her hairs were gold*, &c. i. e. *the hairs of one of the ladies were of the colour of gold, and the eyes of the other as clear as crystal*. The king is speaking of the panegyrics pronounced by the two lovers on their mistresses. On examining the first quarto, 1598, I have found my conjecture confirmed; for so it reads. *One and on* are frequently confounded in the old copies of our author's plays. See a note on *K. John*, Act III. sc. iii. MALONE.

⁵ — *which such zeal did swear?*] See p. 379. n. 2. MALONE.

⁶ *Your eyes do make no coaches*;] Alluding to a passage in the king's sonnet:

“No drop but as a coach doth carry thee.” STEEVENS.

The old copy has—*couches*. Mr. Pope corrected it. MALONE.

O me, with what strict patience have I sat,
To see a king transformed to a gnat⁷!
To see great Hercules whipping a gig,
And profound Solomon to tune a jig,
And Nestor play at push-pin with the boys,
And critick Timon laugh at idle toys⁸!
Where lies thy grief, O tell me, good Dumain?
And, gentle Longaville, where lies thy pain?
And where my liege's? all about the breast:—
A caudle, ho!

King. Too bitter is thy jest.

Are we betray'd thus to thy over-view?

Bir. Not you by me, but I betray'd to you;
I that am honest; I, that hold it sin
To break the vow I'm engaged in;
I am betray'd, by keeping company
With men like men, of strange inconstancy⁹.

When

7 To see a king transformed to a gnat!] Alluding to the singing of that insect, suggested by the poetry the king had been detected in.

HEATH.

Mr. Tollett seems to think it contains an allusion to St. Matthew, ch. xxiii. v. 24. where the metaphorical term of a *gnat* means a thing of least importance, or what is proverbially small. The smallness of a *gnat* is likewise mentioned in *Cymbeline*. STEEVENS.

Mr. Theobald and the succeeding editors read—to a *knot*. MALONE.

A *knot* is, I believe, a *true lover's knot*, meaning that the king

lay'd his wreathed arms about

His loving bosom—

so long, i. e. remained so long in the lover's posture, that he seemed actually transformed into a *knot*. The word *sat* is in some counties pronounced *sof*. This may account for the seeming want of exact rhyme. In the *Tempest* the same thought occurs:

“ ——— sitting,

“ His arms in this sad *knot*.” STEEVENS.

2 — critick *Timon*—] *Critic* and *critical* are used by our author in the same sense as *cynic* and *cynical*. Jago, speaking of the fair sex as harshly as is sometimes the practice of Dr. Warburton, declares he is *nothing if not critical*. STEEVENS.

Mr. Steevens's observation is supported by our author's 112th Sonnet:

“ — my adder's sense

“ To critick and to flatterer stopped are.” MALONE.

9 With men like men, of strange inconstancy.] Thus the old copies. Sir Thomas Hanmer reads, With *vane-like* men. The following pas-

When shall you see me write a thing in rhyme?
Or groan for Joan? or spend a minute's time
In pruning me? When shall you hear that I
Will praise a hand, a foot, a face, an eye,
A gait, a state, a brow, a breast, a waist,
A leg, a limb?—

King. Soft; Whicher away so fast?
A true man, or a thief, that gallows so?

Bir. I post from love; good lover, let me go.

Enter JAQUENETTA and COSTARD.

Jaq. God bless the king! [*offers him a paper.*]

King. What present hast thou there?

Cost. Some certain treason.

King. What makes treason here?

Cost. Nay, it makes nothing, sir.

stage in K. Henry VI. P. III. adds some support to his conjecture:

“Look, as I blow this feather from my face,

“And as the air blows it to me again,

“Obeying with my wind when I do blow,

“And yielding to another when it blows,

“Commanded always by the greater gust;

“Such is the lightness of your common men.”

Mr. Mason, whose remarks on our author's plays have just reached my hands, proposes, with great acuteness, to read

With moon-like men, of strange inconstancy.

So Juliet:

“O swear not by the moon, the inconstant moon.”

Again, more appositely, in *As you like it*: “—I being but a moonish youth, changeable,”—*inconstant*, &c.

Dr. Johnson thinks the poet might have meant—“With men like common men.” So also Mr. Heath: “With men of strange inconstancy, as men in general are.”

Strange, which is not in the quarto or first folio, was added by the editor of the second folio, and consequently any other word as well as that may have been the author's; for all the additions in that copy were manifestly arbitrary, and are generally injudicious. MALONE.

I believe the emendation [*vane-like*] is proper. So, in *Much ado about nothing*:

“If speaking, why a vane blown with all winds.” STEEVENS.

[†] In pruning me? A bird is said to *prune* himself when he picks and seeks his feathers. So, in *K. Henry IV. Part I*:

“Which makes him *prune* himself, and bristle up

“The crest of youth.” STEEVENS.

King.

King. If it mar nothing neither,
The treason, and you, go in peace away together.

Jaq. I beseech your grace, let this letter be read;
Our parson * misdoubts it; 'twas treason he said.

King. Biron, read it over.— [*giving him the letter.*]
Where hadst thou it?

Jaq. Of Costard.

King. Where hadst thou it?

Cost. Of Dun Adramadio, Dun Adramadio.

King. How now! what is in you? why dost thou tear it?

Bir. A toy, my liege, a toy; your grace needs not fear it.

Long. It did move him to passion, and therefore let's
hear it.

Dum. It is Biron's writing, and here is his name,

[*picks up the pieces.*]

Bir. Ah, you whoreson loggerhead, [*to Cost.*] you were
born to do me shame.—

Guilty, my lord, guilty; I confess, I confess.

King. What?

Bir. That you three fools lack'd me fool to make up
the mess:

He, he, and you, and you, my liege, and I,
Are pick-purses in love, and we deserve to die.

O, dismiss this audience, and I shall tell you more.

Dum. Now the number is even.

Bir. True, true; we are four:—

Will these turtles be gone?

King. Hence, firs; away.

Cost. Walk aside the true folk, and let the traitors stay.

[*Exeunt COSTARD and JAQUENETTA.*]

Bir. Sweet lords, sweet lovers, O let us embrace!

As true we are, as flesh and blood can be:

The sea will ebb and flow, heaven shew his face;

Young blood doth not obey an old decree:

We cannot cross the cause why we were born;

Therefore, of all hands must we be forsworn.

* Our parson—] Here, as in a former instance, (see p. 370,) in the authentic copies of this play, this word is spelt *person*; but there being no reason for adhering here to the old spelling, the modern, in conformity to the rule generally observed in this edition, is preferred. MALONE.

King. What, did these rent lines shew some love of thine?

Bir. Did they, quoth you? Who sees the heavenly Rosaline,

That, like a rude and savage man of Inde,
At the first opening of the gorgeous east,
Bows not his vassal head; and, stricken blind,
Kisses the base ground with obedient breast?

What peremptory eagle-eyed eye
Dares look upon the heaven of her brow,
That is not blinded by her majesty?

King. What zeal, what fury hath inspir'd thee now?
My love, her mistress, is a gracious moon;
She, an attending star², scarce seen a light.

Bir. My eyes are then no eyes, nor I Birón³:

O, but for my love, day would turn to night!

Of all complexions the cull'd sovereignty
Do meet, as at a fair, in her fair cheek;
Where several worthies make one dignity;
Where nothing wants, that want itself doth seek.

Lend me the flourish of all gentle tongues,—
Fye, painted rhetorick! O, she needs it not:
To things of sale a seller's praise belongs⁴;
She passes praise; then praise too short doth blot.

² *My love, her mistress, is a gracious moon,
She, an attending star,—]*

— Micat inter omnes
Julum sidus, velut inter ignes
Luna minores. HOR. MALONE.

Something like this is a stanza of Sir Henry Wotton, of which the poetical reader will forgive the insertion:

*You meaner beauties of the night,
That poorly satisfy our eyes
More by your number than your light,
You common people of the skies,
What are you when the sun shall rise?* JOHNSON.

³ *My eyes are then no eyes, nor I Birón:]* Here, and indeed throughout this play, the name of Birón is accented on the second syllable. In the first quarto, 1598, and the folio 1623, he is always called *Berone*. From the line before us it appears, that in our author's time the name was pronounced *Birone*. MALONE.

⁴ *To things of sale a seller's praise belongs;]* So in our author's 21st Sonnet:

"I will not praise, that purpose not to sell." MALONE.

A wither'd

A wither'd hermit, five score winters worn,
Might shake off fifty, looking in her eye:
Beauty doth varnish age, as if new born,
And gives the crutch the cradle's infancy.

O 'tis the sun that maketh all thing's shine!

King. By heaven thy love is black as ebony.

Bir. Is ebony like her? O wood divine!

A wife of such wood were felicity.

O, who can give an oath? where is a book?

That I may swear, beauty doth beauty lack,
If that she learn not of her eye to look:

No face is fair, that is not full so black.

King. O paradox! Black is the badge of hell,
The hue of dungeons, and the fowl of night;

And beauty's crest becomes the heavens well.

Bir. Devils soonest tempt, resembling spirits of light.

O, if in black my lady's brows be deckt,

It mourns, that painting, and usurping hair,

Should ravish doters with a false aspect;

And therefore is she born to make black fair.

Her

- 5 — *O wood divine!*] The old copies read—*O word.* The emendation is Mr. Theobald's; and has been adopted by the subsequent editors.

MALONE.

6 — *Black is the badge of hell,*

— *the fowl of night,*] This is Dr. Warburton's emendation. Old copies—*school.* In our author's 148th sonnet we have

"Who art as black as bell, as dark as night. MALONE.

7 *And beauty's crest becomes the heavens well.*] *Crest* is here properly opposed to *badge.* *Black*, says the *King*, is the *badge of hell*, but that which graces the heaven is *the crest of beauty.* *Black* darkens hell, and is therefore hateful: *white* adorns heaven, and is therefore lovely. JOHNSON.

And beauty's *crest* becomes the heavens well,] i. e. the very *top*, the *height* of beauty, or the utmost degree of fairness, becomes the heavens. So the word *crest* is explained by the poet himself in *King John*:

"—— This is the very *top*,

"The *height*, the *crest*, or *crest* unto the *crest*

"Of murder's arms."

In heraldry, a *crest* is a device placed above a coat of arms. Shakspeare therefore assumes the liberty to use it in a sense equivalent to *top* or *utmost height*, as he has used *spire* in *Coriolanus*:

"— to the *spire* and top of praises vouch'd." TOLLET.

8 — and *usurping hair.*] *And*, which is wanting in the old copies, was supplied by the editor of the second folio. *Usurping hair* alludes to the fashion, which prevailed among ladies in our author's time, of

B b 4

wearing

Her favour turns the fashion of the days ;

For native blood is counted painting now ;

And therefore red that would avoid dispraise,

Paints itself black, to imitate her brow.

Dum. To look like her, are chimney-sweepers black.

Long. And, since her time, are colliers counted bright.

King. And Ethiops of their sweet complexion crack.

Dum. Dark needs no candles now, for dark is light.

Bir. Your mistresses dare never come in rain,

For fear their colours should be wash'd away.

King. 'Twere good, yours did ; for, sir, to tell you plain,

I'll find a fairer face not wash'd to-day.

Bir. I'll prove her fair, or talk till dooms-day here.

King. No devil will fright thee then so much as she.

Dum. I never knew man hold vile stuff so dear.

Long. Look, here's thy love : my foot and her face see.

[*showing his face.*]

Bir. O, if the streets were paved with thine eyes,

Her feet were much too dainty for such tread !

Dum. O vile ! then as she goes, what upward lies

The street should see as she walk'd over head.

King. But what of this ? Are we not all in love ?

Bir. O nothing so sure ; and thereby all forsworn.

King. Then leave this chat ; and, good Birón, now prove

Our loving lawful, and our faith not torn.

Dum. Ay, marry, there ;—some flattery for this evil.

Long. O some authority how to proceed ;

Some tricks, some quilllets⁹, how to cheat the devil.

Dum. Some salve for perjury.

Bir. O, 'tis more than need !—

wearing false hair, or *periwigs*, as they were then called, before that kind of covering for the head was worn by men. See Vol. I. p. 176, n. 8 ; and Vol. III. p. 57, n. 9. The sentiments here uttered by Birón may be found, in nearly the same words, in our author's 127th Sonnet.

MALONE.

⁹ — *some quilllets,*—] *Quillet* is the peculiar word applied to law-chicane. I imagine the original to be this. In the French pleadings, every several allegation in the plaintiff's charge, and every distinct plea in the defendant's answer, began with the words *qu'il est* ;—from whence was formed the word *quillet*, to signify a false charge or an evasive answer.

WARBURTON.

Have

Have at you then, affection's men at arms¹ :
 Consider, what you first did swear unto ;—
 To fast,—to study,—and to see no woman ;—
 Flat treason 'gainst the kingly state of youth.
 Say, can you fast ? your stomachs are too young :
 And abstinence engenders maladies.
 And where that you have vow'd to study, lords,
 In that each of you hath forsworn² his book :
 Can you still dream, and pore, and thereon look ?
 For when would you, my lord, or you, or you,
 Have found the ground of study's excellence,
 Without the beauty of a woman's face ?
 From women's eyes this doctrine I derive ;
 They are the ground, the books, the academes,
 From whence doth spring the true Promethean fire.
 Why, universal plodding prisons up³
 The nimble spirits in the arteries⁴ ;
 As motion, and long-during action, tires
 The sinewy vigour of the traveller.
 Now, for not looking on a woman's face,
 You have in that forsworn the use of eyes ;
 And study too the causer of your vow :
 For where is any author in the world,
 Teaches such beauty as a woman's eye⁵ ?
 Learning is but an adjunct to ourself,
 And where we are, our learning likewise is.

¹ — affection's men at arms :] *A man at arms* is a soldier armed at all points, both offensively and defensively. It is no more than, *The soldiers of affection.* JOHNSON.

² — hath forsworn—] Old Copies—*have.* Corrected by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

³ — prisons up—] The quarto 1598, and the folio 1623, read—*poisons up.* The emendation was made by Mr. Theobald. A passage in *King John* may add some support to it :

“ Or, if that surly spirit, melancholy,

“ Had bak'd thy blood, and made it *heavy, thick,*

“ Which else *runs tickling up* and down the veins, &c.” MALONE.

⁴ *The nimble spirits in the arteries ;*] In the old system of physic they gave the same office to the *arteries* as is now given to the *nerves* ; as appears from the name, which is derived from *ἀρτηρία*. WARBURTON.

⁵ *Teaches such beauty as a woman's eye ?*] i. e. a lady's eyes give a fuller notion of beauty than any authour. JOHNSON.

Then

Then, when ourselves we see in ladies' eyes,
 Do we not likewise see our learning there?
 O, we have made a vow to study, lords;
 And in that vow we have forsworn our books⁶;
 For when would you, my liege, or you, or you,
 In leaden contemplation, have found out
 Such fiery numbers⁷, as the prompting eyes
 Of beauteous tutors⁸ have enriched you with?
 Other slow arts entirely keep the brain;
 And therefore finding barren practisers,
 Scarce shew a harvest of their heavy toil:
 But love, first learned in a lady's eyes,
 Lives not alone immured in the brain;
 But with the motion of all elements,
 Courses as swift as thought in every power;
 And gives to every power a double power,
 Above their functions and their offices:
 It adds a precious seeing to the eye;
 A lover's eyes will gaze an eagle blind;
 A lover's ear will hear the lowest sound,
 When the suspicious head of theft is stopp'd⁹;
 Love's feeling is more soft, and sensible,
 Than are the tender horns of cockled snails;

⁶ — *our books*;] i. e. our true books, from which we derive most information;—the eyes of women. MALONE.

⁷ *In leaden contemplation have found out*

Such fiery numbers—] Numbers are, in this passage, nothing more than poetical measures. Could you, says Biron, by solitary contemplation, have attained such poetical fire, such spritely numbers, as have been prompted by the eyes of beauty? JOHNSON.

⁸ *Of beauteous tutors*—] Old Copies—*beauty's*. Corrected by Sir T. Hanmer. MALONE.

⁹ — *the suspicious head of theft is stopp'd*;] i. e. a lover in pursuit of his mistress has his sense of hearing quicker than a thief (who suspects every sound he hears) in pursuit of his prey. WARBURTON.

"*The suspicious head of theft*" is the *brad* suspicious of theft. "He watches like one that fears robbing," says Speed, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*. This transposition of the adjective is sometimes met with. Grimme tells us, in *Damon and Pythias*:

"*A heavy pouch with golds makes a light hart*." FARMER.

I rather incline to Dr. Warburton's interpretation, in support of which Mr. Malone observes, that "the thief is as watchful on his part as the person who fears to be robbed; and Biron poetically makes theft a person."

MALONE.

Love's

Love's tongue proves dainty Bacchus gross in taste :
For valour, is not love a Hercules,
Still climbing trees in the Hesperides ?
Subtle as sphinx ; as sweet, and musical,
As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair ;
And, when love speaks, the voice of all the gods
Makes heaven drowsy with the harmony .

Never

Still climbing trees in the Hesperides ?] The *Hesperides* were the daughters of Hesperus, who, according to some writers, were possessed of those golden apples which Hercules carried away, though they were guarded by a dragon. More ancient mythologists suppose them to have been possessed of some very beautiful sheep. Our author had heard or read of "the gardens of the Hesperides," and seems to have thought that the latter word, was the name of the garden in which the golden apples were kept ; as we say, the gardens of the *Tuilleries*, &c. MALONE.

As bright Apollo's lute, strung with his hair ;] These words are to be taken in their literal sense ; and, in the stile of Italian imagery, the thought is highly elegant. The very same sort of conception occurs in Lilly's *Mydas*, [1592] Act. IV. sc. I. Pan tells Apollo, "Had thy lute been of laurel, and the strings of Daphne's hair, thy tunes might have been compared to my notes." T. WARTON.

The same thought occurs in *How to chuse a good wife from a bad*, 1608 :

"Hath he not torn those gold wires from thy head,

"Wherewith Apollo would have strung his harp,

"And kept them to play musick to the gods." STEVENS.

And, when love speaks, the voice of all the gods

Makes heaven drowsy with the harmony.] The old copies read —*make*. The emendation was made by Sir T. Hanmer. More correct writers than Shakspeare often fall into this inaccuracy when a noun of multitude has preceded the verb. In a former part of this speech the same error occurs : "—each of you *have* forsworn—." MALONE.

The meaning is, whenever love speaks, all the gods join their voices with his in harmonious concert. HEATH.

When Love speaks, (says Biron) the assembled gods reduce the element of the sky to a calm, by their harmonious applauses of this favoured orator.

STEVENS.

Few passages have been more canvassed than this. I believe it wants no alteration of the words, but only of the pointing :

And, when love speaks, (the voice of all,) the gods

Make heaven drowsy with the harmony.

Love, I apprehend, is called the *voice of all*, as gold, in *Timon*, is said to *speak with every tongue* ; and the *gods* (being drowsy themselves *with the harmony*) are supposed to make heaven drowsy. If one could possibly suspect Shakspeare of having read *Pindar*, one should say, that the idea of music making the hearers drowsy, was borrowed from the first Pythian,

TYRWHITT.

Perhaps

Never durst poet touch a pen to write,
 Until his ink were temper'd with love's sighs;
 O, then his lines would ravish savage ears,
 And plant in tyrants mild humility.
 From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:³
 They sparkle still the right Promethean fire;
 They are the books, the arts, the academes,
 That shew, contain, and nourish all the world;
 Else, none at all in aught proves excellent:
 Then fools you were, these women to forswear;
 Or, keeping what is sworn, you will prove fools.
 For wisdom's sake, a word that all men love;

³ Perhaps here is an accidental transposition. We may read, as, I think, some one has proposed before;

—— the voice makes all the gods
 Of heaven drowsy with the harmony." FARMER.

That harmony had the power to make the hearers drowsy, the present commentator might infer from the effect it usually produces on himself. In *Cynthia's Revenge*, 1613, however, is an instance which should weigh more with the reader:

"Howl forth some ditty, that vast hell may ring
 "With charms all-potent, earth asleep to bring."

Again, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*:

"—— music call, and strike more dead
 "Than common sleep, of all these five the sense." STEEVENS.

So also in *K. Henry IV. P. II*:

"—— softly, pray;
 "Let there be no noise made, my gentle friends,
 "Unless some dull and favourable hand
 "Will whisper musick to my wearied spirit."

Again, in *Pericles*, 1609:

"—— Most heavenly musick!
 "It nips me into listening, and thick slumber
 "Hangs on mine eyes; let me rest." MALONE.

3 *From women's eyes this doctrine I derive:*] In this speech I suspect a more than common instance of the inaccuracy of the first publishers:

From women's eyes this doctrine I derive,
 and several other lines, are as unnecessarily repeated. Dr. Warburton was aware of this, and omitted two verses, which Dr. Johnson has since inserted. Perhaps the players printed from piece-meal parts, or retained what the author had rejected, as well as what had undergone his revival. It is here given according to the regulation of the old copies. STEEV.

Biron repeats the principal topics of his argument, as preachers do their text, in order to recall the attention of the auditors to the subject of their discourse. MASON.

Or for love's sake, a word that loves all men⁴;
Or for men's sake, the authors^{*} of these women;
Or women's sake, by whom we men are men;
Let us once lose our oaths, to find ourselves,
Or else we lose ourselves to keep our oaths:
It is religion, to be thus forsworn:
For charity itself fulfils the law;

And who can sever love from charity?

King. Saint Cupid, then! and, soldiers, to the field!

Bir. Advance your standards, and upon them, lords:
Pell mell, down with them! but be first advis'd,
In conflict that you get the sun of them.

Long. Now to plain-dealing; lay these gloses by:
Shall we resolve to woo these girls of France?

King. And win them too: therefore let us devise
Some entertainment for them in their tents.

Bir. First, from the park let us conduct them thither;
Then, homeward, every man attach the hand
Of his fair mistress: in the afternoon
We will with some strange pastime solace them,
Such as the shortness of the time can shape;
For revels, dances, masks, and merry hours,
Fore-run fair Love⁵, strewing her way with flowers.

King. Away, away! no time shall be omitted,
That will be time, and may by us be fitted.

4 — *a word that loves all men*] i. e. that is pleasing to all men. So, in the language of our author's time,—*it likes me well, for it pleases me*. Shakspeare uses the word thus inattentiously, merely for the sake of the antithesis. *Men* in the following line are with sufficient propriety said to be authors of women, and these again of men, the aid of both being necessary to the continuance of human kind. There is surely, therefore, no need of any of the alterations that have been proposed to be made in these lines. MALONE.

I think no alteration should be admitted in these four lines, that destroys the artificial structure of them, in which, as has been observed by the author of the *Revisal*, the word which terminates every line, is prefixed to the word *sake* in that immediately following. TOLLET.

* — *the authors*—] Old Copies—*author*. The emendation was suggested by Dr. Johnson. MALONE.

⁵ *Fore-run fair Love*,] i. e. Venus. So, in *Anthony and Cleopatra*:
“Now for the love of *Love*, and her soft hours—.” MALONE.

Bir.

*Bir. Allons! allons!—Sow'd cockle reap'd no corn*⁶;
 And justice always whirls in equal measure:
 Light wenches may prove plagues to men forsworn;
 If so, our copper buys no better treasure⁷. [*Exeunt.*]

A C T. V. S C E N E I.

Another part of the same.

Enter HOLOFERNES, Sir NATHANIEL, and DUPLY.

*Hol. Satis quod sufficit*⁸.

Nath. I praise God for you, sir: your reasons at dinner have been sharp and sententious⁹; pleasant without scurrility, witty without affection¹, audacious without impudency, learned without opinion, and strange with-

⁶ — *sow'd cockle reap'd no corn*;] This proverbial expression intimates, that beginning with perjury, they can expect to reap nothing but falsehood. The following lines lead us to this sense. WARBURTON.

Dr. Warburton's first interpretation of this passage, which is preserved in Mr. Theobald's edition,—“if we don't take the proper measures for winning these ladies, we shall never achieve them,”—is undoubtedly the true one. HEATH.

Mr. Edwards, however, approves of Dr. Warburton's second thoughts. MALONE.

⁷ Here Mr. Theobald ends the third act. JOHNSON.

⁸ *Satis quod sufficit.*] i. e. Enough's as good as a feast. STEEVENS.

⁹ *Your reasons at dinner have been &c.*] I know not well what degree of respect Shakspeare intends to obtain for this vicar, but he has here put into his mouth a finished representation of colloquial excellence. It is very difficult to add any thing to this character of the schoolmaster's table-talk, and perhaps all the precepts of Castiglione will scarcely be found to comprehend a rule for conversation so justly delineated, so widely dilated, and so nicely limited.

It may be proper just to note, that *reason* here, and in many other places, signifies *discourse*; and that *audacious* is used in a good sense for *spirited, animated, confident*. *Opinion* is the same with *obstinacy* or *opiniatreté*. JOHNSON.

So, again in this play:

“Yet fear not thou, but speak *audaciously*.” STEEVENS.

¹ — *without affection*,] i. e. without affectionation. So, in *Hamlet*:

“No matter that might incite the author of *affection*.”

So, in *Twelfth Night*, Malvolio is call'd “an *affection'd* ass. STEEV.

out hereby. I did converse this *quendam* day with a companion of the king's, who is intituled, nominated, or called, Don Adriano de Armado.

Hol. *Novi hominem tanquam te:* His humour is lofty, his discourse peremptory, his tongue filed², his eye ambitions, his gait majestical, and his general behaviour vain, ridiculous, and thrafonical³. He is too picked⁴, too spruce, too affected, too odd, as it were, too peregrinate, as I may call it.

Nath. A most singular and choice epithet.

[*takes out his table-book.*]

Hol. He draweth out the thread of his verbosity finer than the staple of his argument. I abhor such fanatical phantasms⁵, such infociable and point-devise⁶ companions; such rackers of orthography, as to speak, doubt, fine, when he should say, doubt; det, when he should pronounce, debt; d, e, b, t; not, d, e, t: he clepeth a calf, cauf; half, hauf; neighbour, *vocatur*, nebour; neigh, abbreviated, ne: This is abhominable⁶, (which he would call abominable,) it insinuateth me of insanie⁷; *Ne intelligis, domine?* to make frantick, lunatick.

Nath. *Laus deo, bene intelligo.*

² — *his tongue filed,*] Chaucer, Skelton, and Spenser, are frequent in their use of this phrase. Ben Jonson has it likewise. STEEVENS.

³ — *thrafonical.*] The use of the word *thrafonical* is no argument that the author had read Terence. It was introduced to our language long before Shakspeare's time. FARMER.

⁴ — *too picked,*] i. e. nicely dressed. The substantive *pickedness* is used by Ben Jonson for *nicety in dress*. Discoveries, vol. vii. p. 116: — "too much *pickedness* in it manly." TYRWHITT.

Again, in Nashe's *Apologie of Pierce Penniless*, 1593: "—he might have showed a *picked* effeminate carpet knight, under the fictitious person of Hermaphroditus." MALONE.

⁵ — *such fanatical phantasms,*] See p. 362, n. 5. MALONE.

⁶ — *point-devise*—] A French expression for the utmost, or finical exactness. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *abhominable,*] So the word is constantly spelt in the old moralities and other antiquated books. STEEVENS.

⁷ — *it insinuateth me of insanie,*] The old copies read—*insanie*. This emendation, as well as that in the next speech, (*bene*, instead of *bene*,) is Mr. Theobald's. Dr. Farmer with great probability proposes to read—*it insinuateth me of insanie*. MALONE.

Insanie appears to have been a word anciently used, STEEVENS.

Hol.

Hol. Bone?—bone, for bend : Priscian⁸ a little scratch'd ;
'twill serve.

Enter ARMADO, MoTH, and COSTARD.

Nath. *Videsne quis venit ?*

Hol. *Video & gaudeo.*

Arm. Chirra !

[to Moth.

Hol. *Quare Chirra, pot firrah ?*

Arm. Men of peace, well encounter'd.

Hol. Most military fir, salutation.

Moth. They have been at a great feast of languages,
and stolen the scraps. [to Costard aside.

Cost. O, they have lived long on the alms-basket of
words⁹ ! I marvel, thy master hath not eaten thee for a
word ; for thou art not so long by the head as *hono-
rificabilitudinitatibus*¹ : thou art easier swallow'd than a
flap-dragon².

Moth. Peace ; the peal begins.

Arm. Monsieur, [to Hol.] are you not letter'd ?

Moth. Yes, yes ; he teaches boys the horn-book :—
What is a, b, spelt backward with a horn on his head ?

Hol. Ba, *pueritia*, with a horn added.

Moth. Ba, most silly sheep, with a horn :—You hear
his learning.

Hol. *Quis, quis*, thou consonant ?

Moth. The third of the five vowels³, if you repeat
them ; or the fifth, if I.

⁸ Bone ?—bone for bend : Priscian a little scratch'd ;—] *Diminuis Prisciani caput*—is applied to such as speak false Latin. THEOBALD.

This passage, which in the old copies is very corrupt, was amended by the commentator above mentioned. MALONE.

⁹ — the alms-basket of words !] i. e. the refuse of words. STEEV.

The refuse meat of families was put into a basket in our author's time, and given to the poor. So, in Florio's *Second Frutes*, 1591 : "Take away the table, fould up the cloth, and put all those pieces of broken meat into a basket for the poor." MALONE.

¹ *Honorificabilitudinitatibus* :] This word, whensoever it comes, is often mentioned as the longest word known. JOHNSON.

² — a flap-dragon.] A flap-dragon is a small inflammable substance, which toppers swallow in a glass of wine. See a note on *K. Henry IV.* Part II. Act. II. sc. ult. STEEVENS.

³ The third of the five vowels,—] The old copies read—the last. The emendation is Mr. Theobald's. MALONE.

Arm.

Hol. I will repeat them; a e, i,—

Moth. The sheep: the other two concludes it; o, u⁴.

Arm. Now, by the salt wave of the Mediterranean, a sweet touch, a quick venew of wit⁵. snip, snap, quick and home; it rejoiceth my intellect: true wit.

Moth. Offer'd by a child to an old man; which is wit-old.

Hol. What is the figure? what is the figure?

Moth. Horns.

Hol. Thou disputest like an infant: go, whip thy gig.

Moth. Lend me your horn to make one, and I will whip about your infamy *circum circa*⁶; A gig of a cuckold's horn!

Cost. An I had but one penny in the world, thou should'st have it to buy ginger-bread: hold, there is the very remuneration I had of thy master, thou half-penny purse of wit, thou pigeon-egg of discretion. O, an the heavens were so pleased, that thou wert but my bastard! what a joyful father would'st thou make me! Go to; thou hast it *ad dunghill*, at the fingers' ends, as they say.

Hol. O, I smell false Latin; dunghill for *unguent*.

Arm. Art thou man, *preambula*; we will be singled from the barbarous. Do you not educate youth at the charge-house⁷ on the top of the mountain?

Hol. Or, *mons*, the hill.

Arm. At your sweet pleasure, for the mountain.

Hol. I do, sans question.

Arm. Sir, it is the king's most sweet pleasure and affection, to congratulate the princess at her pavilion, in the posteriors of this day, which the rude multitude call, the afternoon.

Hol. The posterior of the day, most generous sir, is liable, congruent, and measurable for the afternoon: the

4 — the other two concludes it; o, u.] By o, u, *Moth* would mean *Ob* you; i. e. you are the sheep still, either way; no matter which of us repeats them. THEOBALD.

5 — a quick venew of wit:] A *venew* is the technical term for a bout at the fencing-school. STEEVENS.

6 — *circum circa*;) Old Copies—*unum cita*. Corrected by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

7 — the charge-house] I suppose, is the *free-school*. STEEVENS.

word is well cull'd, chose; sweet and apt, I do assure you, sir, I do assure.

Arm. Sir, the king is a noble gentleman; and my familiar, I do assure you, very good friend:—For what is inward between us, let it pass:—I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy;—I beseech thee, apparel thy head⁶:—and among other importunate and most serious designs,—and of great import indeed, too;—but let that pass;—for I must tell thee, it will please his grace (by the world) sometime to lean upon my poor shoulder; and with his royal finger, thus, dally with my excrement⁹, with my mustachio: but sweet heart, let that pass. By the world, I recount no fable; some certain special honours it pleaseth his greatness to impart to Armado, a soldier, a man of travel, that hath seen the world;—but let that pass.—The very all of all is,—but, sweet heart, I do implore secrecy,—that the king would have me present the princess, sweet chuck, with some delightful ostentation, or show, or pageant, or antick, or fire-work. Now, understanding that the curate, and your sweet self, are good at such eruptions, and sudden breaking out of mirth, as it were, I have acquainted you withal, to the end to crave your assistance.

Hol. Sir, you shall present before her the nine worthies.—Sir Nathaniel, as concerning some entertainment of time, some show in the posterior of this day, to be render'd by our assistance,—the king's command, and this

⁸ *I do beseech thee, remember thy courtesy;—I beseech thee, apparel thy head:*] I believe the word *not* was inadvertently omitted by the transcriber or compositor; and that we should read—*I do beseech thee, remember not thy courtesy.*—Armado is boasting of the familiarity with which the king treats him, and intimates (“but let that pass,”) that when he and his Majesty converse, the king lays aside all state, and makes him wear his hat: “*I do beseech thee, (will he say to me) remember not thy courtesy; do not observe any ceremony with me; be covered.*” “The putting off the hat at the table” (says Florio in his *Second Frutes*, 1591, is a kind of *courtesie* or ceremony rather to be avoided than otherwise.”

These words may, however, be addressed by Armado to Holofernes, whom we may suppose to have stood *uncovered* from respect to the Spaniard. MALONE.

⁹ — *dally with my excrement,*—] The author calls the beard *valour's excrement* in the *Merchant of Venice*. JOHNSON.

most

most gallant, illustrate, and learned gentleman,—before the princely; I say, none so fit as to present the nine worthies.

Nath. Where will you find men worthy enough to present them?

Hol. Joshua, yourself; myself, or this gallant gentleman¹, Judas Maccabæus; this swain, because of his great limb or joint, shall pass Pompey the great; the page, Hercules.

Arm. Pardon, sir, error: he is not quantity enough for that worthy's thumb: he is not so big as the end of his club.

Hol. Shall I have audience? he shall present Hercules in minority: his *enter* and *exit* shall be strangling a snake; and I will have an apology for that purpose.

Moth. An excellent device! so, if any of the audience hiss, you may cry; *well done, Hercules! now thou crushest the snake!* that is the way to make an offence gracious; though few have the grace to do it.

Arm. For the rest of the worthies?—

Hol. I will play three myself.

Moth. Thrice-worthy gentleman!

Arm. Shall I tell you a thing?

Hol. We attend.

Arm. We will have, if this fadge not², an antick. I beseech you, follow.

Hol. *Via*³, goodman Dull! thou hast spoken no word all this while.

Dull. Nor understood none neither, sir.

Hol. *Allons!* we will employ thee.

Dull. I'll make one in a dance or so: or I will play on the tabor to the worthies, and let them dance the hay.

Hol. Most dull, honest Dull, to our sport, away. [*Exeunt.*]

¹ — myself, or this gallant gentleman,—] The old copy has—and this &c. The correction was made by Mr. Steevens. We ought, I believe, to read in the next line—shall pass for Pompey the great. If the text be right, the speaker must mean that the swain shall, in representing Pompey, surpass him, “because of his great limb.” MALONE.

² — if this fadge not,] i. e. suit not. STEEVENS.

³ *Via*,—] An Italian exclamation, signifying, *Courage! come on!*

SCENE II.

Another part of the same. Before the Princess's Pavilion.

*Enter the Princess, CATHARINE, ROSALINE,
and MARIA.*

Prin. Sweet hearts, we shall be rich ere we depart,
If fairings come thus plentifully in:

A lady wall'd about with diamonds!—

Look you, what I have from the loving king.

Ref. Madam, came nothing else along with that?

Prin. Nothing but this? yes, as much love in rhyme,
As would be cramm'd up in a sheet of paper,
Writ on both sides the leaf, margent and all;
That he was fain to seal on Cupid's name.

Ref. That was the way to make his god-head wax⁴;
For he hath been five thousand years a boy.

Cath. Ay, and a shrewd unhappy gallows too.

Ref. You'll ne'er be friends with him; he kill'd your
sister.

Cath. He made her melancholy, sad, and heavy;
And so she died: had she been light, like you,
Of such a merry, nimble, stirring spirit—
She might have been a grandam ere she dy'd:
And so may you; for a light heart lives long.

Ref. What's your dark meaning, mouse⁵, of this light
word?

Cath. A light condition in a beauty dark.

Ref. We need more light to find your meaning out.

Cath. You'll mar the light, by taking it in snuff⁶;
Therefore, I'll darkly end the argument.

Ref. Look, what you do, you do it still i'the dark.

Cath. So do not you; for you are a light wench.

⁴ — to make his god-head wax;] To wax anciently signified to grow.
It is yet said of the moon, that she waxes and wanes. STEEVENS.

⁵ — mouse,] This was a term of endearment formerly. So, in
Hamlet:

“Pinch wanton on your cheek; call you his mouse.” MALONE.

⁶ — taking it in snuff;] Snuff is here used equivocally for anger,
and the snuff of a candle. See *K. Henry IV. P. I. Act I. sc. iii.* STEEV.

Ros. Indeed, I weigh not you ; and therefore light.

Cath. You weigh me not,—O, that's you care not for me.

Ros. Great reason ; for, Past cure is still past care⁷.

Prin. Well bandied both ; a set of wit well play'd.

But Rosaline, you have a favour too :

Who sent it ? and what is it ?

Ros. I would, you knew :

An if my face were but as fair as yours,

My favour were as great ; be witness this.

Nay, I have verses too, I thank Birón :

Thy numbers true ; and, were the numb'ring too,

I were the fairest goddesses on the ground :

I am compar'd to twenty thousand fairs.

O, he hath drawn my picture in his letter !

Prin. Any thing like ?

Ros. Much, in the letters ; nothing, in the praise.

Prin. Beauteous as ink ; a good conclusion.

Cath. Fair as a text B in a copy-book.

Ros. "Ware pencils⁸ ! How ? let me not die your debtor,

My red dominical, my golden letter :

⁷ — for, *Past cure is still past care.*] The old copy reads—*past care is still past cure.* The transposition was proposed by Dr. Thirlby, and, it must be owned, is supported by a line in *King Richard II.*

Things past redress are now with me past care.

So also in a pamphlet entitled *Holland's Leaguer*, 4to. 1632 : "She had got this adage in her mouth, *Things past cure, past care.*"—Yet the following lines in our author's 147th Sonnet seem rather in favour of the old reading :

"Past cure I am, now reason is past care,

"And frantick mad with evermore unrest." MALONE.

⁸ *"Ware pencils !*] Rosaline, a black beauty, reproaches the fair Catharine for painting. JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson mistake the meaning of this sentence ; it is not a reproach, but a cautionary threat. Rosaline says that Birón had drawn her picture in his letter ; and afterwards playing on the word *letter*, Catharine compares her to a text B. Rosaline in reply advises her to beware of pencils, that is of drawing likenesses, lest she should retaliate ; which she afterwards does, by comparing her to a red dominical letter, and calling her marks of the small pox oes. MASON.

O, that your face were not so full of O's²!

Cath. A pox of that jest¹! and beshrew all throws!

Prin. But what was sent to you from fair Dumain?

Cath. Madam, this glove.

Prin. Did he not send you twain?

Cath. Yes, madam; and moreover,
Some thousand verses of a faithful lover:

A huge translation of hypocrisy,³

Vilely compil'd, profound simplicity.

Mar. This, and these pearls, to me sent Longaville;
The letter is too long by half a mile.

Prin. I think no less; Dost thou not wish in heart,
The chain were longer, and the letter short?

Mar. Ay, or I would these hands might never part.

Prin. We are wise girls, to mock our lovers so.

Ros. They are worse fools, to purchase mocking so.
That same Birón I'll torture ere I go.

O, that I knew he were but in by the week²!

How I would make him fawn, and beg, and seek;

And wait the season, and observe the times,

And spend his prodigal wits in bootless rhyme;

² — *so full of O's!*] i. e. pimples. Shakspeare talks of "*fiery O's* and eyes of light," in another play. STEEVENS.

¹ *A pox of that jest!* &c.] This line which in the old copies is given to the princess, Mr. Theobald rightly attributed to Catharine. The metre, as well as the mode of expression, shews that "*I beshrew*", the reading of those copies, was a mistake of the transcriber. MALONE.

Mr. Theobald is scandalized at this language from a princess. But there needs no alarm,—the *small pox* only is alluded to; with which, it seems, Catharine was pitted; or, as it is quaintly expressed, "*her face was full of O's*." Davison has a canzonnet on his lady's sickness of the poxe: and Dr. Donne writes to his sister: "*At my return from Kent, I found Pegge had the poxe,—I humbly thank God, it hath not much disfigured her.*" FARMER.

³ — *in by the week!*] This I suppose to be an expression taken from hiring servants or artificers; meaning, I wish Ith as as sure of his service for any time limited, as if I had hired him. The expression was a common one. So, in *Vittoria Corombona*, 1612: "*What, are you in by the week?*" So; I will try now whether thy wit be close prisoner." Again, in the *Wit of a Woman*, 1604:

"Since I am in by the week, let me look to the year."

STEEVENS.

And

And shape his service wholly to my behests³,
And make him proud to make me proud that jests!
So portent-like would I o'erfway his state⁴,
That he should be my fool, and I his fate.

Prin. None are so⁵ surely caught, when they are catch'd,
As wit turn'd fool: folly, in wisdom hatch'd,
Hath wisdom's warrant, and the help of school;
And wit's own grace to grace a learned fool.

Ref. The blood of youth burns not with such excess,
As gravity's revolt to wantonness⁶.

Mar. Folly in fools bears not so strong a note,
As foolery in the wise, when wit doth dote;
Since all the power thereof it doth apply,
To prove, by wit, worth in simplicity.

Enter BOYET.

Prin. Here comes Boyet, and mirth is in his face.

Boy. O, I am stabb'd with laughter! Where's her grace?

Prin. Thy news, Boyet?

Boy. Prepare, madam, prepare!—

Arm, wenches, arm! encounters mounted are

³ — *wholly to my behests*;] The quarto 1598, and the first folio, read—to my *device*. The emendation, which the rhyme confirms, was made by the editor of the second folio, and is one of the very few corrections of any value to be found in that copy. MALONE.

⁴ *So portent-like &c.*] In former copies—*So pertaunt-like &c.* In old farces, to shew the inevitable approaches of death and destiny, the Fool of the farce is made to employ all his stratagems, to avoid Death or Fate; which very stratagems, when they are ordered, bring the Fool, at every turn, into the very jaws of Fate. To this Shakspeare alludes again in *Measure for Measure*:

“ ——— merely thou art Death's Fool;

“ For him thou labour'st by thy flight to shun,

“ And yet run'st towards him still.”

It is plain from all this, that the nonsense of *pertaunt-like*, should be read, *portent-like*, i. e. I would be his fate or destiny, and, like a *portent*, hang over, and influence his fortunes. For *portents* were not only thought to *forebode*, but to *influence*. So the Latins called a person destined to bring mischief, *fatale portentum*. WARBURTON.

This emendation appeared first in the Oxford Edition. MALONE.

⁵ *None are so &c.*] These are observations worthy of a man who has surveyed human nature with the closest attention. JOHNSON.

⁶ — *to wantonness*.] The quarto 1598, and the first folio have—to *wantons be*. For this emendation we are likewise indebted to the second folio. MALONE.

Against your peace : Love doth approach disguis'd,
 Armed in arguments ; you'll be surpris'd :
 Muster your wits ; stand in your own defence ;
 Or hide your heads like cowards, and fly hence.

Prin. Saint Dennis to saint Cupid⁷ ! What are they,
 That charge their breath against us ? say, scout, say.

Boy. Under the cool shade of a sycamore,
 I thought to close mine eyes some half an hour :
 When, lo, to interrupt my purpos'd rest,
 Toward that shade I might behold address'd
 The king and his companions : warily
 I stole into a neighbour thicket by,
 And overheard what you shall overhear ;
 That, by and by, disguis'd they will be here.
 Their herald is a pretty knavish page,
 That well by heart hath conn'd his embassy :
 Action, and accent, did they teach him there ;
Thus must thou speak, and thus thy body bear :
 And ever and anon they made a doubt,
 Presence majestical would put him out ;
For, quoth the King, an angel shalt thou see ;
Yet fear not thou, but speak audaciously ;
 The boy reply'd, *An angel is not evil ;*
I should have fear'd her, had she been a devil.
 With that all laugh'd, and clap'd him on the shoulder ;
 Making the bold wag by their praises bolder.
 One rubb'd his elbow thus ; and swer'd, and swore,
 A better speech was never spoke before ;
 Another, with his finger and his thumb,
 Cry'd, *Via ! we will do't, come what will come :*
 The third he caper'd, and cry'd, *All goes well :*
 The fourth turn'd on the toe, and down he fell.
 With that, they all did tumble on the ground,
 With such a zealous laughter, so profound,
 That in this spleen ridiculous⁸ appears,
 To check their folly, passion's solemn tears⁹.

Prin.

⁷ *Saint Dennis to saint Cupid !*] The princess of France invokes, with too much levity, the patron of her country, to oppose his power to that of Cupid. JOHNSON.

⁸ *—spleen ridiculous—*] is, a ridiculous fit. JOHNSON.

⁹ *—passion's solemn tears.*] So, in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

“ Made

Prin. But what, but what, come they to visit us?

Boy. They do, they do; and are apparel'd thus,—
Like Muscovites, or Russian's: as I guess,
Their purpose is, to parle, to court, and dance:
And every one his love-feat will advance
Unto his several mistress; which they'll know
By favours several, which they did bestow.

Prin. And will they so? the gallants shall be task'd;—
For, ladies, we will every one be mask'd;
And not a man of them shall have the grace,
Despight of suit, to see a lady's face.
Hold, Rosaline, this favour thou shalt wear;
And then the king will court thee for his dear;
Hold, take thou this, my sweet, and give me thine;
So shall Birón take me for Rosaline,—
And change you favours too; so shall your loves
Woo contrary, deceiv'd by these removes.

Ros. Come on then; wear the favours most in sight.

Cath. But, in this changing, what is your intent?

Prin. The effect of my intent is, to cross theirs:
They do it but in mocking merriment;
And mock for mock is only my intent.
Their several counsels they unbosom shall
To loves mistook: and so be mock'd withal,
Upon the next occasion that we meet,
With visages display'd, to talk, and greet.

Ros. But shall we dance, if they desire us to't?

Prin. No; to the death, we will not move a foot:
Nor to their penn'd speech render we no grace;
But, while 'tis spoke, each turn away her face¹.

"Made mine eyes water, but more merry tears

"The passion of loud laughter never shed." MALONE.

⁹ Like Muscovites, or Russians:] The settling commerce in Russia was, at that time, a matter that much ingrossed the concern and conversation of the publick. There had been several embassies employed thither on that occasion; and several tracts of the manners and state of that nation written: so that a mask of Muscovites was as good an entertainment to the audience of that time, as a coronation has been since. WARB.

¹ — her face.] The first folio, and the quarto 1598, have—his face. Corrected by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

Boy.

Boy. Why, that contempt will kill the speaker's heart,
And quite divorce his memory from his part.

Prin. Therefore I do it; and, I make no doubt,
The rest will ne'er come in², if he be out.
There's no such sport, as sport by sport o'erthrown;
To make theirs ours, and ours none but our own;
So shall we stay, mocking intended game;
And they, well mock'd, depart away with shame.

Boy. The trumpet sounds; be mask'd, the maskers come,
[*Trumpets sound within.*

[*The ladies mask.*
Enter the King, BIRON, LONGAVILLE, and DUMAIN,
in Russian habits, and masked; MOth, Muscians, and
Attendants.

Moth. All hail, the richest beauties on the earth!

Boy. Beauties no richer than rich taffata³.

Moth. A holy parcel of the fairest dames,

[*The ladies turn their backs to him.*
That ever turn'd their backs—to mortal views.

Bir. Their eyes, villain, their eyes.

Moth. That ever turn'd their eyes to mortal views!

Out—

Boy. True, out, indeed.

Moth. Out of your favours, heavenly forms, vouchsafe
Not to behold—

Bir. Once to behold, rogue.

Moth. Once to behold with your sun-beamed eyes,
—with your sun-beamed eyes—

Boy. They will not answer to that epithet;
You were best call it, daughter-beamed eyes.

Moth. They do not mark me, and what brings me out.

Bir. Is this your perfectness? be gone, you rogue.

Ref. What would these strangers? know their minds,
Boyet:

² — will ne'er come in] The quarto, 1598, and the folio, 1623,
read—will e'er. The correction was made in the second folio. MALONE.

³ — than rich taffata.] i. e. the taffata masks they wore to conceal
themselves. Boyet is sneering at the absurdity of complimenting the
beauty of the ladies, when they were mask'd. THEOBALD.

This line is given in the old copies to Biron. The present regulation
is Mr. Theobald's. MALONE.

If they do speak our language, 'tis our will
That some plain man recount their purposes :
Know what they would.

Boy. What would you with the princes ?

Bir. Nothing but peace, and gentle visitation.

Ros. What would they, say they ?

Boy. Nothing but peace, and gentle visitation.

Ros. Why, that they have ; and bid them so be gone.

Boy. She says, you have it, and you may be gone.

King. Say to her, we have measur'd many miles,
To tread a measure with her on this grass.

Boy. They say that they have measur'd many a mile,
To tread a measure⁴ with you on this grass.

Ros. It is not so : ask them, how many inches
Is in one mile : if they have measur'd many,
The measure then of one is easily told.

Boy. If, to come hither you have measur'd miles,
And many miles ; the princess bids you tell,
How many inches do fill up one mile.

Bir. Tell her, we measure them by weary steps.

Boy. She hears herself.

Ros. How many weary steps,
Of many weary miles you have o'ergone,
Are number'd in the travel of one mile ?

Bir. We number nothing that we spend for you ;
Our duty is so rich, so infinite,
That we may do it still without account.
Vouchsafe to shew the sunshine of your face,

⁴ *To tread a measure,*] The measures were dances solemn and slow.
So, in *Orchestra*, a poem by Sir John Davies, 1622 :

“ — all the feet whereon these measures go,

“ Are only sporrades, solemn, grave, and slow.”

They were performed at Court, and at publick entertainments of the societies of law and equity, at their halls, on particular occasions. It was formerly not deemed inconsistent with propriety even for the gravest persons to join in them ; and accordingly at the revels which were celebrated at the inns of court, it has not been unusual for the first characters of the law to become performers in *treading the measures*. See Dugdale's *Origines Judiciales*. REED.

See Beatrice's description of this dance in *Much ado about Nothing*, p. 225. MALONE.

That we, like savages, may worship it.

Ref. My face is but a moon, and clouded too.

King. Blessed are clouds, that do as such clouds do!
Vouchsafe, bright moon, and these thy stars⁵, to shine
(Those clouds remov'd) upon our watry eyne.

Ref. O vain petitioner! beg a greater matter;
Thou now request'st but moon-shine in the water.

King. Then in our measure do but vouchsafe one change:
Thou bid'st me beg: this begging is not strange.

Ref. Play, musick, then: nay you must do it soon.

[*Musick plays.*]

Not yet;—no dance:—thus change I like the moon.

King. Will you not dance? How come you thus estrang'd?

Ref. You took the moon at full; but now she's chang'd.

King. Yet still she is the moon, and I the man*.

The musick plays; vouchsafe some motion to it.

Ref. Our ears vouchsafe it.

King. But your legs should do it.

Ref. Since you are strangers, and come here by chance,
We'll not be nice: take hands;—we will not dance.

King. Why take we hands then?

Ref. Only to part friends:

Court'sy, sweet hearts⁶; and so the measure ends.

King. More measure of this measure; be not nice.

Ref. We can afford no more at such a price.

King. Prize you yourselves; What buys your company?

Ref. Your absence only.

King. That can never be.

Ref. Then cannot we be bought:⁷ and so adieu;

Twice to your visor, and half once to you!

King. If you deny to dance, let's hold more chat.

Ref. In private then.

King. I am best pleas'd with that. [They converse apart.]

⁵ Vouchsafe, bright moon, and these thy stars.—] When queen Elizabeth asked an ambassadour how he liked her ladies, *It is hard, said he, to judge of stars in the presence of the sun.* JOHNSON.

* — the man.] I suspect, that a line which rhimed with this, has been lost. MALONE.

⁶ Court'sy, sweet hearts.] See Vol. I. p. 26:

“Court'sied when you have, and kiss'd—” MALONE.

Bir.

Bir. White-handed mistress, one sweet word with thee.

Prin. Honey, and milk, and sugar; there is three.

Bir. Nay then, two treys, (an if you grow so nice,) Metheglin, wort, and malmsey;—Well run, dice!

There's half a dozen sweets.

Prin. Seventh sweet, adieu!

Since you can cog⁷, I'll play no more with you.

Bir. One word in secret.

Prin. Let it not be sweet.

Bir. Thou griev'st my gall.

Prin. Gall? bitter.

Bir. Therefore meet.

[*They converse apart.*]

Dum. Will you vouchsafe with me to change a word?

Mar. Name it.

Dum. Fair lady,—

Mar. Say you so? Fair lord,—

Take that for your fair lady.

Dum. Please it you,

As much in private, and I'll bid adieu.

[*They converse apart.*]

Cath. What, was your vizor made without a tongue?

Long. I know the reason, lady, why you ask.

Cath. O, for your reason! quickly, sir; I long.

Long. You have a double tongue within your mask,

And would afford my speechless vizor half.

Cath. Veal, quoth the Dutchman⁸; Is not veal a calf?

Long. A calf, fair lady?

Cath. No, a fair lord calf.

Long. Let's part the word.

Cath. No, I'll not be your half:

Take all, and wean it; it may prove an ox.

Long. Look, how you butt yourself in these sharp mocks!

Will you give horses, chaste lady? do not so.

Cath. Then die a calf, before your horns do grow.

⁷ Since you can cog,] To cog, signifies to falsify the dice, and to falsify a narrative, or to lye. JOHNSON.

⁸ Veal, quoth the Dutchman;—] I suppose by *veal*, she means *well*, sounded as foreigners usually pronounce that word; and introduced merely for the sake of the subsequent question. MALONE.

Long.

Long. One word in private with you, ere I die.

Cath. Bleat softly then, the butcher hears you cry.

[*They converse apart.*]

Boy. The tongues of mocking wenches are as keen
As is the razor's edge invifible,

Cutting a fmaller hair than may be feen ;

Above the fenfe of fenfe : fo fenfible

Seemeth their confcience ; their conceits have wings,

Fleeter than arrows, bullets, wind, thought, fwifter things.

Rof. Not one word more, my maids ; break off
break off.

Bir. By heaven, all dry-beaten with pure scoff !

King. Farewell, mad wenches ; you have fimple wives.

Prin. Twenty adicus, my frozen Mufcovites.—

[*Exeunt King, Lords, MORTON, Mufick, and Attendants.*]

Are thefe the breed of wits fo wonder'd at ?

Boy. Tapers they are, with your fweet breaths
puff'd out.

Rof. Well-liking wits^o they have ; grofs, grofs ; fat, fat.

Prin. O poverty in wit, kingly-poor flout !

Will they not, think you, hang themfelves to night ?

Or ever, but in vizors, fhew their faces ?

This pert Biron was out of countenance quite.

Rof. O, they were all in lamentable cafes¹ !

The king was weeping-ripe for a good word.

Prin. Biron did fwear himfelf out of all fuit.

Mar. Dumain was at my fervice, and his fword :

No point, quoth I² ; my fervant ftraight was mute.

Cath. Lord Longaville faid, I came o'er his heart ;
And throw you, what he call'd me ?

Prin. Qualm, perhaps.

^o *Well-liking wits*—] *Well-liking* is the fame as *embonpoint*. So, in *Job*, ch. xxxix, v. 4. “—Their young ones are in *good-liking*.” STEEV.

¹ O ! they were all &c.] O, which is not found in the firft quarto or folio, was added by the editor of the fecond folio. MALONE.

² No point, quoth I ;] *Point* in French is an adverb of negation ; but, if properly fpoken, is not founded like the point of a fword. A quibble, however, is intendd. From this and other paffages it appears, that either our author was not well acquainted with the pronunciation of the French language, or it was different formerly from what it is at prefent. MALONE.

Cath. Yes, in good faith.

Prin. Go, sickness as thou art!

Ros. Well, better wits have worn plain statute-caps³.
But will you hear? the king is my love sworn.

Prin. And quick Birón hath plighted faith to me.

Cath. And Longaville was for my service born.

Mar. Dumain is mine, as sure as bark on tree.

Boy. Madam, and pretty mistresses, give ear:
Immediately they will again be here

In their own shapes; for it can never be,

They will digest this harsh indignity.

Prin. Will they return?

Boy. They will, they will, God knows;
And leap for joy, though they are lame with blows:

Therefore, change favours; and, when they repair,
Blow like sweet roses in this summer air.

Prin. How blow? how blow? speak to be understood.

Boy. Fair ladies, mask'd, are roses in their bud:

³ — *better wits have worn plain statute-caps.*] This line is not universally understood, because every reader does not know that a statute cap is part of the academical habit. Lady Rosaline declares that her expectation was disappointed by these courtly students, and that *better wits* might be found in the common places of education. JOHNSON.

Woollen caps were enjoined by act of parliament, in the year 1571, the 13th of queen Elizabeth, to be worn by all above six years of age (except the nobility and some others) on sabbath days and holy-days, under the penalty of ten groats. GREY.

I think my own interpretation of this is right. JOHNSON.

Probably the meaning is—*better wits may be found among the citizens*, who are not in general remarkable for fallies of imagination. In Marston's *Dutch Courtesan*, 1605, Mrs. Mulligrub says,—“though my husband be a citizen, and his cap's made of wool, yet I have wit.” Again, in the *Family of Love*, 1608: “’Tis a law enacted by the common-council of statute caps.” Again, in *Neaves from Hell, brought by the Devil's carrier*, 1605: “—in a bowling alley, in a flat-cap, like a sheep-keeper.” STEEVENS.

The statute mentioned by Dr. Grey was repealed in the year 1597. The epithet by which these statute caps are described, “*plain statute caps*,” induces me to believe the interpretation given in the preceding note by Mr. Steevens, the true one. The king and his lords probably wore hats adorned with feathers. So they are represented in the print prefixed to this play in Mr. Rowe's edition, probably from some stage tradition. MALONE.

Dis-mask'd

Dismask'd, their damask sweet commixture shewn,
Are angels vailing clouds, or roses blown⁴.

Prin. Avaunt, perplexity! What shall we do,
If they return in their own shapes to woo?

Ros. Good madam, if by me you'll be advis'd,
Let's mock them still, as well known, as disguis'd:
Let us complain to them what fools were here,
Disguis'd like Muscovites, in shapeless⁵ gear;
And wonder, what they were; and to what end
Their shallow shows, and prologue vilely penn'd,
And their rough carriage so ridiculous,
Should be presented at our tent to us.

Boy. Ladies, withdraw; the gallants are at hand.

Prin. Whip to our tents, as roes run over land.

[*Exeunt* Princess⁶, Ros. CAT. and MAR.]

Enter the King, BIRON, LONGAVILLE, and DUMAIN,
in their proper habits.

King. Fair sir, God save you! Where's the princess?

Boy. Gone to her tent: Please it your majesty,
Command me any service to her thither?

King. That she vouchsafe me audience for one word.

Boy. I will; and so will she, I know, my lord.

[*Exit.*]

Bir. This fellow pecks⁷ up wit, as pigeons peas⁸;
And utters it again when God doth please:

⁴ *Are angels vailing clouds, or roses blown.*] Ladies unmask'd, says Boyet, are like angels vailing clouds, or letting those clouds which obscured their brightness, sink from before them. JOHNSON.

To *avale* comes from the Fr. *aval*, [Terme de batelier] down, downward, down the stream. So, in Laneham's *Narrative of Queen Elizabeth's Entertainment at Kenilworth-Castle*, 1575: "—as on a sea-shore when the water is *avail'd*." STEEVENS.

⁵ — *shapeless gear*;) *Shapeless* for uncouth. WAREBURTON.

⁶ *Exeunt* Princess, &c.] Mr. Theobald ends the fourth act here.

JOHNSON.

⁷ *This fellow pecks*—] This is the reading of the first quarto. The folio has—*picks*. MALONE.

⁸ — *as pigeons peas*;) This expression is proverbial.

"Children pick up words as pigeons peas,

"And utter them again as God shall please."

See Ray's *Collection*. STEEVENS.

He

He is wit's pedler; and retails his wares
 At wakes, and wassels⁹, meetings, markets, fairs;
 And we that sell by gross, the Lord doth know,
 Have not the grace to grace it with such show.
 This gallant pins the wenches on his sleeve;
 Had he been Adam, he had tempted Eve:
 He can carve too, and lisp¹: Why, this is he,
 That kifs'd his hand away in courtesy;
 This is the ape of form, monsieur the nice,
 That, when he plays at tables, chides the dice
 In honourable terms; nay, he can sing
 A mean² most meanly; and, in ushering,
 Mends him who can: the ladies call him, sweet;
 The stairs, as he treads on them, kifs his feet:
 This is the flower that smiles on every one,
 To shew his teeth as white as whales bone³:
 And consciences, that will not die in debt,
 Pay him the due of honey-tongued Boyet.

King. A blister on his sweet tongue, with my heart,
 That put Armado's page out of his part!

9 — wassels,] *Wassels* were meetings of rustic mirth and intemperance. STEEVENS.

Waes beal, that is, be of health, was a salutation first used by the lady Rowena to King Vortiger. Afterwards it became a custom in villages, on new year's eve and twelfth night, to carry a *Wassel* or *Wassail* bowl from house to house, which was presented with the Saxon words above mentioned. Hence in process of time *wassel* signified intemperance in drinking, and also a meeting for the purposes of festivity. MALONE.

¹ *He can carve too, and lisp:*] I cannot cog, (says Falstaff in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*,) and say, thou art this and that, like a many of these *lisping* hawthorn buds, that come like women in men's apparel—. On the subject of *carving* see Vol. I. p. 209, n. 7. MALONE.

² *A mean—*] *The mean*, in music, is the tenor. STEEVENS.

³ — *as whales bone:*] The Saxon genitive case. So, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*:

"Swifter than the moon's sphere."

It should be remembered that some of our ancient writers suppose *ivory* to be part of the bones of a *whale*. The same simile occurs in the black letter romance of *Sir Iglamour of Artoys*, in that of *Sir Ilinbras*, and in *The Squire of low degree*. STEEVENS.

As white as whales bone is a proverbial comparison in the old poets. See Spenser's *Faery Queen*, b. iii. c. 1. st. 15; and Lord Surrey, folio 24. edit 1567. T. WARTON.

Enter the Princess, usher'd by BOYET; ROSALINE, MARIA, CATHARINE, and attendants.

Bir. See, where it comes!—Behaviour, what wert thou⁴,

Till this mad man shew'd thee? and what art thou now?

King. All hail, sweet madam, and fair time of day!

Prin. Fair, in all hail, is foul, as I conceive.

King. Construe my speeches better, if you may.

Prin. Then wish me better, I will give you leave.

King. We came to visit you: and purpose now

To lead you to our court: vouchsafe it then.

Prin. This field shall hold me; and so hold your vow:

Nor God, nor I, delight in perjur'd men.

King. Rebuke me not for that which you provoke;

The virtue of your eye must break my oath⁵.

Prin. You nick-name virtue: vice you should have spoke;

For virtue's office never breaks men's troth.

Now, by my maiden honour, yet as pure

As the unfully'd lily, I protest,

A world of torments though I should endure,

I would not yield to be your house's guest:

So much I hate a breaking cause to be

Of heavenly oaths, vow'd with integrity.

King. O, you have liv'd in desolation here,

Unseen, unvisited, much to our shame.

Prin. Not so, my lord; it is not so, I swear;

We have had pastimes here, and pleasant game:

A mess of Russians left us but of late.

King. How, madam? Russians?

Prin. Ay, in truth, my lord;

Trim gallants, full of courtship, and of state.

Ros. Madam, speak true:—It is not so, my lord:

4 — Behaviour, *what wert thou,*] Behaviour here signifies—courtly or studied manners. MALONE.

5 *The virtue of your eye must break my oath.*] I believe the author means that the *virtue*, in which word *goodness* and *power* are both comprised, *must dissolve* the obligation of the oath. The princess, in her answer, takes the most invidious part of the ambiguity. JOHNSON.

My lady, (to the manner of the days,)

In courtesy, gives undeserving praise.

We four, indeed, confronted were with four

In Russian habit : here they stay'd an hour,

And talk'd apace ; and in that hour my lord,

They did not bless us with one happy word.

I dare not call them fools ; but this I think,

When they are thirsty, fools would fain have drink.

Bir. This jest is dry to me.—My gentle sweet⁶,

Your wit makes wise things foolish : when we greet⁷

With eyes best seeing heaven's fiery eye,

By light we lose light : Your capacity

Is of that nature, that to your huge store

Wise things seem foolish, and rich things but poor.

Ref. This proves you wise and rich ; for in my eye,—

Bir. I am a fool, and full of poverty.

Ref. But that you take what doth to you belong,

It were a fault to snatch words from my tongue.

Bir. O, I am yours, and all that I possess.

Ref. All the fool mine ?

Bir. I cannot give you less.

Ref. Which of the vizors was it, that you wore ?

Bir. Where ? when ? what vizor ? why demand you this ?

Ref. There, then, that vizor ; that superfluous case,

That hid the worse, and shew'd the better face.

King. We are descry'd : they'll mock us now downright.

Dum. Let us confess, and turn it to a jest.

⁶ My gentle sweet,] The word *my*, which is wanting in the first quarto, and folio, I have supplied. *Sweet* is generally used as a substantive by our author, in his addresses to ladies. So, in *The Winter's Tale* :

“ — When you speak, *sweet*,

“ I'd have you do it ever.”

Again, in the *Merchant of Venice* :

“ And now, good *sweet*, say thy opinion.”

Again, in *Othello* :

“ O, my *sweet*,

“ I prattle out of tune.”

The editor of the second folio, with less probability, (as it appears to me,) reads—*fair, gentle, sweet*. MALONE..

⁷ — *wben we greet &c.*] This is a very lofty and elegant compliment, JOHNSON.

Prin. Amaz'd, my lord? Why looks your highness sad?

Ref. Help, hold his brows! he'll swoon! Why look you pale?—

Sea-sick, I think, coming from Muscovy.

Bir. Thus pour the stars down plagues for perjury.

Can any face of brags hold longer out?—

Here stand I, lady; dart thy skill at me;

Bruise me with scorn, confound me with a flout;

Thrust thy sharp wit quite through my ignorance;

Cut me to pieces with thy keen conceit;

And I will wish thee never more to dance,

Nor never more in Russian habit wait.

O! never will I trust to speeches penn'd,

Nor to the motion of a school-boy's tongue;

Nor never come in vizard to my friend;

Nor woo in rhyme, like a blind harper's song.

Taffata phrases, silken terms precise,

Three-pil'd hyperboles, spruce affection⁸,

Figures pedantical; these summer-flies

Have blown me full of maggot ostentation:

I do forswear them: and I here protest,

By this white glove, (how white the hand, God knows!)

Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express'd

In russet yeas, and honest kersey noes:

And, to begin, wench,—so God help me, la!—

My love to thee is sound, sans crack or flaw.

Ref. Sans sans, I pray you⁹.

⁸ Three pil'd hyperboles, spruce affection,] The modern editors read —*affection*. There is no need of change. We already in this play have had *affection* for *affection*;—"witty without *affection*." The word was used by our author and his contemporaries, as a quadrisyllable; and the rhyme such as they thought sufficient. MALONE.

Three-pil'd hyperboles,] A metaphor from the pile of velvet. So, in the *Winter's Tale*, Autolycus says, "I have worn *three-pile*."

STEEVENS.

⁹ Sans, sans, I pray you.] It is scarce worth remarking, that the conceit here is obscured by the punctuation. It should be written *Sans sans*, i. e. without sans; without French words: an affectation of which Biron had been guilty in the last line of his speech, though just before he had forsworn all *affectation* in phrases, terms, &c. TYRWHITT.

Bir.

Bir. Yet I have a trick

Of the old rage:—bear with me, I am sick;
I'll leave it by degrees. Soft, let us see;—
Write, *Lord have mercy on us*¹, on those three;
They are infected, in their hearts it lies;
They have the plague, and caught it of your eyes:
These lords are visited; you are not free,
For the Lord's tokens on you do I see.

Prin. No, they are free, that gave these tokens to us.

Bir. Our states are forfeit, seek not to undo us.

Ros. It is not so; for how can this be true,
That you stand forfeit, being those that sue²?

Bir. Peace: for I will not have to do with you.

Ros. Nor shall not, if I do as I intend.

Bir. Speak for yourselves, my wit is at an end.

King. Teach us, sweet madam, for our rude transgression

Some fair excuse.

Prin. The fairest is confession.

Were you not here, but even now, disguis'd?

King. Madam, I was.

Prin. And were you well advis'd?

King. I was, fair madam.

Prin. When you then were here,

What did you whisper in your lady's ear?

King. That more than all the world I did respect her.

Prin. When she shall challenge this, you will reject her.

¹ *Write, Lord have mercy on us,—*] This was the inscription put upon the door of the houses infected with the plague, to which Biron compares the love of himself and his companions, and pursuing the metaphor finds the *tokens* likewise on the ladies. The *tokens* of the plague are the first spots or discolorations, by which the infection is known to be received. JOHNSON.

So, in Sir Thomas Overbury's *Characters*, 1616: "*Lord have mercy on us* may well stand over their doors, for debt is a most dangerous city pestilence. MALONE.

² ——— *how can this be true,*

That you should forfeit, being those that sue?] That is, how can those be liable to forfeiture that begin the process. The jest lies in the ambiguity of *sue*, which signifies *to prosecute by law*, or *to offer a petition*. JOHNSON.

King. Upon mine honour, no.

Prin. Peace, peace, forbear ;

Your oath once broke, you force not to forswear³.

King. Despise me, when I break this oath of mine.

Prin. I will ; and therefore keep it :—Rosaline,
What did the Russian whisper in your ear ?

Ros. Madam, he swore, that he did hold me dear
As precious eye-sight ; and did value me
Above this world : adding thereto, moreover,
That he would wed me, or else die my lover.

Prin. God give thee joy of him ! the noble lord
Most honourably doth uphold his word.

King. What mean you, madam ? by my life, my troth,
I never swore this lady such an oath.

Ros. By heaven, you did ; and to confirm it plain,
You gave me this : but take it, sir, again.

King. My faith, and this, the princess I did give ;
I knew her by this jewel on her sleeve.

Prin. Pardon me, sir, this jewel did she wear ;
And lord Birón, I thank him, is my dear :—
What ; will you have me, or your pearl again ?

Bir. Neither of either ; I remit both twain.—

I see the trick on't ; Here was a consent⁵,

(Knowing aforehand of our merriment,)

To dash it like a Christmas comedy :

Some carry-tale, some please-man, some slight zany⁶,

3 — you force not to forswear.] *You force not* is the same with *you make no difficulty*. This is a very just observation. The crime which has been once committed, is committed again with less reluctance.

JOHNSON.

So, in Warner's *Albion's England*, b. x. ch. 59 :

“ — he forced not to hide how he did err.” STEEVENS.

4 *Neither of either* ;] This seems to have been a common expression in our author's time. It occurs in the *London Prodigal*, 1605, and other comedies. MALONE.

5 — a consent,] i. e. a conspiracy. So, in *K. Henry VI. Part I* :

“ — the stars

“ That have consented to king Henry's death.” STEEVENS.

6 — zany,] A zany is a buffoon, a merry Andrew, a gross mimic.

STEEVENS.

Some

— Some mumble-news, some trencher-knight⁷, some Dick,—
That smiles his cheek in jeers⁸; and knows the trick
To make my lady laugh, when she's dispos'd,—
Told our intents before: which once disclos'd,
The ladies did change favours; and then we,
Following the signs, woo'd but the sign of she.
Now, to our perjury to add more terror,
We are again forsworn; in will, and error.
Much upon this it is⁹:—And might not you [to Boyet.
Forestal our sport, to make us thus untrue?
Do not you know my lady's foot by the squire¹⁰?
And laugh upon the apple of her eye?
And stand between her back, fir, and the fire,
Holding a trencher, jesting merrily?

You

7 — *some trencher-knight,*] See below:

"And stand between her back, fir, and the fire,

"Holding a trencher,—&c." MALONE.

8 — *some Dick,*

That smiles his cheek in jeers;] The old copies read—in *jeeres*. The present emendation, which I proposed some time ago, I have since observed, was made by Mr. Theobald. Dr. Warburton endeavours to support the old reading, by explaining *jeers* to mean *wrinkles*, which belong alike to laughter and old age. But allowing the word to be used in that licentious sense, surely our author would have written, not *in*, but *into*, years—i. e. *into* wrinkles, as in a passage quoted by Mr. Steevens from *Twelfth Night*: "— he does *smile his cheek into* more *lines* than is in the new map, &c." The change being only that of a single letter for another nearly resembling it, I have placed *jeers* (formerly spelt *jeeres*) in the text. The words—*jeer*, *flout*, and *mock*, were much more in use in our author's time than at present.

Out-roaring Dick was a celebrated singer, who, with W. Wimbars, is said by Henry Chettle, in his *KIND HARTS DREAM*, to have got twenty shillings a day by singing at Braintree fair, in Essex. Perhaps this itinerant droll was here in our author's thoughts. This circumstance adds some support to the emendation now made. From the following passage in *Sir John Oldcastle*, 1600, it seems to have been a common term for a noisy swaggerer:

"O he, fir, he's a desperate Dick indeed;

"Bar him your house."

Again, in Kemp's *Nine daies Wonder*, &c. 4to. 1600:

"A boy arm'd with a poking stick

"Will dare to challenge cutting Dick." MALONE.

⁹ *Much upon this it is:*] Dr. Johnson would give these words to Boyet. MALONE.

¹⁰ — *by the squire?*] From *esquierre*, Fr. a rule or square. The sense is nearly the same as that of the proverbial expression in our own language, *he hath got the length of her foot*; i. e. he hath humoured her to

You put our page out: Go, you are allow'd²;
Die when you will, a smock shall be your shrowd.
You leer upon me, do you; there's an eye,
Wounds like a leaden sword.

Boy. Full merrily

Hath this brave manage³, this career been run.

Bir. Lo, he is tilting straight! Peace; I have done,

Enter COSTARD.

Welcome, pure wit! thou partest a fair fray.

Coff. O Lord, sir, they would know,
Whether the three worthies shall come in, or no.

Bir. What, are there but three?

Coff. No, sir; but it is vara fine,
For every one purfents three.

Bir. And three times thrice is nine.

Coff. Not so, sir; under correction, sir; I hope, it is not so:
You cannot beg us⁴, sir, I can assure you, sir; we know
what we know:

I hope, sir, three times thrice, sir,—

Bir. Is not nine.

Coff. Under correction, sir, we know whereuntil it doth
amount.

Bir. By Jove, I always took three threes for nine.

Coff. O Lord, sir, it were pity you should get your
living by reckoning, sir.

Bir. How much is it?

Coff. O Lord, sir, the parties themselves, the actors,
sir, will shew whereuntil it doth amount: for mine own
part, I am, as they say, but to perfect one man,—e'en
one poor man⁵; Pompon the great, sir.

Bir.

long, that he can persuade her to what he pleases. HEATH.

Squire in our author's time was the common term for a *rule*. See Min-
shew's *Dict.* in v. The word occurs again in the *Winter's Tale*. MALONE.

² — *Go, you are allow'd*;] i. e. you may say what you will; you are
a licensed fool, a common jester. So, in *Twelfth Night*:

“*There is no slander in an allow'd fool.*” WARBURTON.

³ *Hath this brave manage*,—] The old copy has *manager*. Cor-
rected by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

⁴ *You cannot beg us*,—] That is, we are not fools; our next re-
lations cannot *beg* the wardship of our persons and fortunes. One of
the legal tests of a *natural* is to try whether he can number. JOHNSON.

⁵ — *one man, e'en one poor man*,] The old copies read—*in one poor
man*.

Bir. Art thou one of the worthies?

Cost. It pleased them, to think me worthy of Pompey the great: for mine own part, I know not the degree of the worthy; but I am to stand for him⁶.

Bir. Go, bid them prepare.

Cost. We will turn it finely off, sir; we will take some care. [Exit Costard.]

King. Biron, they will shame us, let them not approach.

Bir. We are shame-proof, my lord: and 'tis some policy To have one show worse than the king's and his company.

King. I say, they shall not come.

Prin. Nay, my good lord, let me o'er-rule you now; That sport best pleases, that doth least know how: Where zeal strives to content, and the contents Die in the zeal of them which it presents⁷.

Their

man. For the emendation I am answerable. The same mistake has happened in several places in our author's plays. See my note on *All's well that ends well*, Act. I. sc. iii. "You are shallow, madam," &c.

MALONE.

⁶ *I know not the degree of the worthy, &c.*] This is a stroke of satire which, to this hour, has lost nothing of its force. Few performers are solicitous about the history of the character they are to represent. STEEV.

⁷ *That sport best pleases, that doth least know how:*

Where zeal strives to content, and the contents

Die in the zeal of them which it presents, &c.] The quarto 1598, and the folio 1623, read—of *that* which it presents. The context, I think, clearly shews that *them* (which, as the passage is unintelligible in its original form, I have ventured to substitute,) was the poet's word. *Which* for *who* is common in our author; So, (to give one instance out of many,) in the *Merchant of Venice*,

"—— a civil doctor,

"*Which* did refuse three thousand ducats of me."

and *ym* and *yt* were easily confounded: nor is the false concord introduced by this reading [of *them* who presents it,] any objection to it; for every page of these plays furnishes us with examples of the same kind: [See Vol. I. p. 40.] So *dies* in the present line, for thus the old copy reads; though here, and in almost every other passage where a similar corruption occurs, I have followed the example of my predecessors, and corrected the error. Where rhimes or metre, however, are concerned, it is impossible. Thus we must still read in *Cymbeline*, *lies*, as in the line before us, *presents*:

"And Phæbus 'gins to rise,

"His steeds to water at those springs

"On chalic'd flowers that *lies*.

Again,

Their form confounded makes most form in mirth;
When great things labouring perish in their birth^s.

Bir. A right description of our sport, my lord.

Enter ARMADO.

Arm. Anointed, I implore so much expence of thy royal sweet breath as will utter a brace of words.

[*Arm. converses with the King, and delivers him a paper.*]

Prin. Doth this man serve God?

Bir. Why ask you?

Prin. He speaks not like a man of God's making.

Arm. That's all one, my fair, sweet, honey monarch: for, I protest, the school-master is exceeding fantastical; too, too vain; too, too vain: But we will put it, as they say, to *fortuna della guerra*. I wish you the peace of mind, most royal complement⁹! [*Exit ARMADO.*]

Again, in the play before us:

"That in this spleen ridiculous appears,

"To check their folly, passion's solemn tears.

Again, in *the Merchant of Venice*:

"Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect."

Dr. Johnson would read—

Die in the zeal of him which them presents.

But *him* was not, I believe, abbreviated in old Mss. and therefore not likely to have been confounded with *that*.

The word *it*, I believe, refers to *sport*. *That sport*, says the princess, *pleases best, where the actors are least skilful; where zeal strives to please, and the contents, or, (as these exhibitions are immediately afterwards called) great things, great attempts, perish in the very act of being produced, from the ardent zeal of those who present the sportive entertainment.* To "*present a play*" is still the phrase of the theatre. It however may refer to *contents*, and that word may mean the most material part of the exhibition. MALONE.

This sentiment of the princess is very natural, but less generous than that of the Amazonian Queen, who says, on a like occasion, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*:

"I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharg'd,

"Nor duty in his service perishing." JOHNSON.

⁸ — labouring *perish in their birth.*] Labouring here means, in the act of parturition. So Roscommon:

"The mountains labour'd, and a mouse was born." MALONE.

⁹ I wish you the peace of mind, most royal complement!] This singular word is again used by our author in his 21st Sonnet:

"Making a complement of proud compare—" MALONE.

King.

King. Here is like to be a good presence of worthies :
He presents Hector of Troy ; the swain, Pompey the
great ; the parish curate, Alexander ; Armado's page,
Hercules ; the pedant, Judas Machabæus.

And if these four worthies¹ in their first show thrive,
These four will change habits, and present the other five.

Bir. There is five in the first show.

King. You are deceiv'd, tis not so.

Bir. The pedant, the braggart, the hedge-priest, the
fool, and the boy :—

Abate a throw at novum², and the whole world again
Cannot prick out³ five such, take each one in his vein.

King. The ship is under sail, and here she comes again.

[Seats brought for the King, Princess, &c.]

¹ *And if these four worthies &c.*] These two lines might have been
designed as a ridicule on the conclusion of *Selimus*, a tragedy, 1594 :

“ If this first part, gentles, do like you well,

“ The second part shall greater murders tell.” STEEVENS.

I rather think Shakspeare alludes to the shifts to which the actors
were reduced in the old theatres, one person often performing two or
three parts. MALONE.

² *Abate a throw at novum*,—] *Abate* throw—is the reading of the
original and authentick copies ; the quarto 1598, and the folio, 1623.
A bare throw &c. was an arbitrary alteration made by the editor of the
second folio. I have added only the article, which seems to have been
inadvertently omitted. I suppose the meaning is, Except or put the
chance of the dice out of the question, and the world cannot produce
five such as these. *Abate*, from the Fr. *abatre*, is used again by our au-
thor, in the same sense, in *All's well that ends well* :

“ ——— those *bated*, that inherit but the fall

“ Of the last monarchy.”

“ *A bare* throw at novum” is to me unintelligible. MALONE.

Novum (or *Novem*) appears to have been some game at dice. STEEV.

³ *Cannot prick out &c.*] Dr. Grey proposes to read, *pick* out. So,
in *K. Henry. IV.* P. I : “ Could the world *pick* thee out three such ene-
mies again ?” The old reading, however, may be right. To *prick* out,
is a phrase still in use among gardeners. To *prick* may likewise have
reference to *vein*. STEEVENS.

Pick is the reading of the quarto, 1598 : Cannot *prick* out,—that
of the folio, 1623. Our author uses the same phrase in his 20th
Sonnet, in the same sense ;—cannot *point* out by a puncture or mark.
Again, in *Julius Cæsar* :

“ Will you be *prick'd* in number of our friends ?” MALONE.

Pageant of the Nine Worthies.

Enter COSTARD arm'd, for Pompey.

Cost. I Pompey am,—

Bir. You lie, you are not he.

Cost. I Pompey am,—

Boy. With libbard's head on knee.

Bir. Well said, old mocker; I must needs be friends with thee.

Cost. I Pompey am, Pompey surnam'd the big,—

Dum. The great.

Cost. It is great, sir;—Pompey surnam'd the great;
That oft in field, with targe and shield, did make my foe to sweat:

And, travelling along this coast, I here am come by chance;
And lay my arms before the legs of this sweet lass of France.
If your ladyship would say, Thanks, Pompey, I had done.

Prin. Great thanks, great Pompey.

Cost. 'Tis not so much worth; but, I hope, I was perfect: I made a little fault in, great.

Bir. My hat to a halfpenny, Pompey proves the best worthy.

A Pageant of the nine worthies.] In MS. Harl. 2057, p. 31, is
"The order of a shewe intended to be made Aug 1, 1621."

"First 2 woodmen &c.

"St. George fighting with the dragon.

"The 9 worthies in compleat armor with crownes of gould on their heads, every one having his esquires to beare before him his shield and penon of armes dressed according as these lords were accustomed to be: 3 Assaralits, 3 Infidels, 3 Christians.

"After them, a Fame, to declare the rare virtues and noble deedes of the 9 worthy women."

Such a pageant as this, we may suppose it was the design of Shakespeare to ridicule. STEEVENS.

With libbard's head on knee.] This alludes to the old heroic habits, which on the knees and shoulders had usually, by way of ornament, the resemblance of a leopard's or lion's head. WARBURTON.

See *Masquing* in Cotgrave's *Dictionary*: "The representation of a lyon's head &c. upon the elbow or knee of some old-fashioned garments." TOLLET.

The *libbard*, as some of the old English glossaries inform us, is the male of the panther. STEEVENS.

Enter

Enter NATHANIEL arm'd, for Alexander.

Nath. When in the world I liv'd, I was the world's commander;

By east, west, north, and south, I spread my conquering might :
My 'scutcheon plain declares, that I am Alifander.

Boy. Your nose says, no, you are not ; for it stands too right ⁶.

Sir. Your nose smells, no, in his ; most tender-smelling knight.

Prin. The conqueror is dismay'd : Proceed, good Alexander.

Nath. When, in the world I liv'd, I was the world's commander ;—

Boy. Most true, 'tis right ; you were so, Alifander.

Sir. Pompey the great,—

Cost. Your servant, and Costard.

Sir. Take away the conqueror, take away Alifander.

Cost. O, sir, [*to Nath.*] you have overthrown Alifander the conqueror ! You will be scraped out of the painted cloth for this : your lion, that holds his poll-ax sitting on a close-stool ⁷, will be given to A-jax ⁸ : he will

⁶ — it stands too right.] It should be remembered, to relish this joke, that the head of Alexander was obliquely placed on his shoulders. STEEVENS.

⁷ — lion, that holds his poll-ax, sitting on a close-stool,] This alludes to the arms given in the old history of the *Nine Worthies*, to "Alexander, the which did beare geules, a lion or, seiante in a chayer, holding a batzell-ax argent." Leigh's *Accidence of Armory*, 1597. p. 23. TOLLET.

⁸ A-jax ;] There is a conceit of *Ajax* and a *jakes*. JOHNSON.

This conceit, paltry as it is, was used by Ben Jonson, and Camden the antiquary. Ben, among his *Epigrams*, has these two lines.

"And I could wish, for their eternis'd sakes,

"My muse had plough'd with his that sung *A-jax*."

So, Camden, in his *Remains*, having mentioned the French word *pet*, says, "Enquire, if you understand it not, of Cloacina's chaplains, or such as are well read in *A-jax*."

See also Sir John Harrington's *New discourse of a stale subject, called, the Metamorphoses of Ajax*, 1596 ; his *Anatomic of the metamorphosed Ajax*, no date ; and *Ulysses upon Ajax*, 1596. All these performances are founded on the same conceit, of *Ajax* and *A-jakes*. To the first of them a license was refused, and the author was forbid the court for writing it. STEEVENS.

be the ninth worthy. A conqueror, and afeard to speak !
run away for shame, Alifander. [*Nath. retires.*] There,
an't shall please you; a foolish mild man; an honest
man, look you, and soon dash'd! He is a marvellous good
neighbour, insooth; and a very good bowler: but, for
Alifander, alas, you see, how 'tis;—a little o'er-parted?
—But there are worthies a coming will speak their mind
in some other sort. • • •

Prin. Stand aside, good Pompey.

*Enter HOLOFERNES arm'd, for Judas, and MOth arm'd,
for HERCULES.*

Hol. Great Hercules is presented by this *inp*,
• *Whose club kill'd Cerberus, that three-headed canus;*
And, when he was a babe, a child, a shrimp,
Thus did he strangle serpents in his manus;

Quoniam, he seemeth in minority;

Ergo, I come with this apology.—

Keep some state in thy exit, and vanish.

[*Exit Moth.*

Judas I am,—

Dum. A Judas!

Hol. Not Iscariot, fir.—

Judas I am, ycleped Machabæus.

Dum. Judas Machabæus clipt, is plain Judas.

Bir. A kissing traitor:—How art thou prov'd Judas?

Hol. Judas I am,—

Dum. The more shame for you, Judas.

Hol. What mean you, fir?

Boy. To make Judas hang himself.

Hol. Begin, fir; you are my elder.

Bir. Well follow'd: Judas was hang'd on an elder.

Hol. I will not be put out of countenance.

Bir. Because thou hast no face.

Hol. What is this?

Boy. A cittern head¹.

Dum. The head of a bodkin.

⁹ — a little o'er-parted:] That is, the part or character allotted to him in this piece is too considerable. MALONE.

¹ A cittern head.] So, in Decker's *Match me in London*, 1631:
—“fiddling on a cittern with a man's broken head at it.” STEEVENS.

Bir.

Bir. A death's face in a ring.

Long. The face of an old roman coin, scarce seen.

Boy. The pummel of Cæsar's faulchion.

Dum. The carv'd-bone face on a flask².

Bir. St. George's half-cheek in a brooch.

Dum. Ay, and in a brooch of lead.

Bir. Ay, and worn in the cap of a tooth-drawer : And now, forward ; for, we have put thee in countenance.

Hol. You have put me out of countenance.

Bir. False ; we have given thee faces.

Hol. But you have out-fac'd them all.

Bir. An thou wert a lion we would do so.

Boy. Therefore, as he is, an ass, let him go.

And so adieu, sweet Jude ! nay, why dost thou stay ?

Dum. For the latter end of his name.

Bir. For the ass to the Jude ; give it him :—Jud-as, away.

Hol. This is not generous, not gentle, not humble.

Boy. A light for monsieur Judas : it grows dark, he may stumble. [*Holofernes retires.*]

Prin. Alas, poor Machabæus, how hath he been baited !

Enter ARMADO arm'd, for Hector.

Bir. Hide thy head, Achilles ; here comes Hector in arms.

Dum. Though my mocks come home by me, I will now be merry,

King. Hector was but a Trojan³ in respect of this.

Boy. But is this Hector ?

Dum. I think, Hector was not so clean-timber'd.

Long. His leg is too big for Hector.

Dum. More calf, certain.

Boy. No ; he is best indued in the small.

Bir. This cannot be Hector.

Dum. He's a god or a painter ; for he makes faces.

Arm. The armipotent Mars, of lances the almighty,

² — on a flask.] i. e. a soldier's powder-horn. STEEVENS.

³ Hector was but a Trojan—] A Trojan, I believe, was in the time of Shakspeare, a tant term for a thief. So, in *K. Henry IV.* Part I : "Tut there are other Trojans that thou dream'st not of, &c." Again, in this scene, "—unless you play the honest Trojan, &c." STEEVENS.

Gave Hector a gift,—

Dum. A gilt nutmeg⁴.

Bir. A lemon.

Long. Stuck with cloves⁵.

Dum. No, cloven.

Arm. Peace!

The armipotent Mars, of lances⁶ the almighty,

Gave Hector a gift, the heir of Ilium;

A man so breath'd, that certain he would fight, yea⁷,

From morn till night, out of his pavilion.

I am that flower,—

Dum. That mint.

Long. That columbine.

Ann. Sweet lord Longaville, rein thy tongue.

Long. I must rather give it the rein; for it runs against Hector.

Dum. Ay, and Hector's a greyhound.

Arm. The sweet war-man is dead and rotten; sweet chucks, beat not the bones of the buried: when he breath'd, he was a man—But I will forward with my device; sweet royalty, [*to the Princess.*] bestow on me the sense of hearing. [*Biron whispers Costard.*]

Prin. Speak, brave Hector; we are much delighted.

Arm. I do adore thy sweet grace's slipper.

Boy. Loves her by the foot.

Dum. He may not by the yard.

Arm. *This Hector far surmounted Hannibal,—*

Cost. The party is gone, fellow Hector, she is gone! she is two months on her way.

⁴ *A gilt nutmeg.*] The quarto, 1598, reads—A gift nutmeg; and if a gilt nutmeg had not been mentioned by B. Jonson, (see Mr. Steevens's next notes,) I should have thought it right. So we say, a gift-horse, &c.

MALONE.

⁵ *Stuck with cloves.*] An orange stuck with cloves appears to have been a common new-year's gift. So, Ben Jonson, in his *Christmas Masque*: "he has an orange and rosemary, but not a clove to stick in it." A gilt nutmeg is mentioned in the same piece, and on the same occasion. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *of lances*] i. e. of lance-men. STEEVENS.

⁷ — *he would fight, yea,*] Thus all the old copies. Pope very plausibly reads—he would fight ye; a common vulgarism. STEEVENS.

Arm.

Arm. What mean'st thou?

Cost. Faith, unless you play the honest Trojan, the poor wench is cast away: she's quick; the child brags in her belly already; 'tis yours.

Arm. Dost thou infamize me among potentates? thou shalt die.

Cost. Then shall Hector be whip'd, for Jaquenetta that is quick by him; and hang'd, for Pompey that is dead by him.

Dum. Most rare Pompey!

Boy. Renowned Pompey!

Bir. Greater than great, great, great, great, Pompey! Pompey the huge!

Dum. Hector trembles.

Bir. Pompey is mov'd:—More Ates, more Ates^s; stir them on, stir them on!

Dum. Hector will challenge him.

Bir. Ay, if he have no more man's blood in's belly than will sup a flea.

Arm. By the north pole, I do challenge thee.

Cost. I will not fight with a pole, like a northern man⁹; I'll dash; I'll do it by the sword:—I pray you, let me borrow my arms¹ again.

Dum. Room for the incensed worthies.

Cost. I'll do it in my shirt.

Dum. Most resolute Pompey!

Moth. Master, let me take you a button-hole lower. Do you not see, Pompey is uncasing for the combat? What mean you? you will lose your reputation.

Arm. Gentlemen, and soldiers, pardon me; I will not combat in my shirt.

Dum. You may not deny it; Pompey hath made the challenge.

^s — more Ates;] That is, more instigation. Ate was the mischievous goddess that incited bloodshed. JOHNSON.

So, in *K. John*:

“An Ate, stirring him to war and strife.” STEEVENS.

⁹ — like a northern man;] *Vir Borealis*, a clown. See Glossary to Urry's Chaucer. FARMER.

¹ — my arms] The weapons and armour which he wore in the character of Pompey. JOHNSON.

Arm. Sweet bloods, I both may and will.

Bir. What reason have you for't?

Arm. The naked truth of it is, I have no shirt; I go woolward for penance.

Moth. True, and it was enjoin'd him in Rome for want of linen²: since when, I'll be sworn, he wore none, but a dish-clout of Jaquenetta's; and that 'a wears next his heart for a favour.

Enter MERCADE.

Mer. God save you, madam!

Prin. Welcome, Mercade;

But that thou interrupt'st our merriment.

Mer. I am sorry, madam; for the news I bring, is heavy in my tongue. The king your father—

Prin. Dead, for my life.

Mer. Even so; my tale is told.

Bir. Worthies, away; the scene begins to cloud.

Arm. For mine own part, I breath free breath; I have seen the day of wrong through the little hole of discretion³, and I will right myself like a soldier. [*Exit Worthies.*

King.

² — it was enjoin'd him in Rome for want of linen: &c.] To go woolward, I believe, was a phrase appropriated to pilgrims and penitentiaries. In this sense it seems to be used in *Pierce Plowman's Vision*, Pass. xviii. fol. 96. b. edit. 1550. It means clothed in wool, and not in linen. T. WARTON.

The same custom is alluded to in *Powell's History of Wales*, 1584: "The Angles and Saxons slew 1000 priests and monks of Bangor, with a great number of lay-brethren, &c. who were come barefooted and woolward to crave mercy, &c." STEEVENS.

In Lodge's *Incaruate Devils*, 1556, we have the character of a swashbuckler: "His common counsell is to go always untruss; except when his shirt is a washing, and then he goes woolward." FARMER.

To this speech in the oldest copy *Boy* is prefixed, by which designation most of *Moth's* speeches are marked. The name of *Boyet* is generally printed at length. It seems better suited to *Armado's* page than to *Boyet*, to whom it has been given in the modern editions. MALONE.

³ I have seen the day of wrong through the little hole of discretion,] I believe he means, "I have hitherto looked on the indignities I have received, with the eyes of discretion, (i. e. not been too forward to resent them,) and will insist on such satisfaction as will not disgrace my character, which is that of a soldier." To have decided the quarrel in the manner proposed by his antagonist would have been at once a derogation from the honour of a soldier, and the pride of a Spaniard.

"One

King. How fares your majesty?

Prin. Boyet, prepare; I will away to-night.

King. Madam, not so; I do beseech you, stay.

Prin. Prepare, I say.—I thank you, gracious lords,

For all your fair endeavours; and entreat,

Out of a new-fad soul, that you vouchsafe

In your rich wisdom, to excuse, or hide,*

The liberal⁴ opposition of our spirits:

If over-boldly we have borne ourselves

In the converse of breath⁵, your gentleness

Was guilty of it.—Farewell, worthy lord!

A heavy heart bears not an humble tongue⁶:

Excuse me so, coming too short of thanks

For my great suit so easily obtain'd.

King. The extreme parts of time extremely form

All causes to the purpose of his speed;

And often, at his very loose⁷, decides

That which long process could not arbitrate:

And though the mourning brow of progeny

Forbids the smiling courtesy of love,

The holy suit which fain it would convince⁸;

Yet since *iron's* argument was first on foot,

* "One may see day at a little hole," is a proverb in Ray's Collection:
"Daylight will peep through a little hole," in Kelly's. STEEVENS.

4 — liberal—] Free to excuse. See p. 271, n. 9; and Vol. I. p. 155.
n. 4. STEEVENS.

5 In the converse of breath,—] Perhaps converse may, in this line,
mean interchange. JOHNSON.

6 An heavy heart bears not an humble tongue:] By humble, the prin-
cess seems to mean obsequiously thankful. STEEVENS.

So, in the Merchant of Venice:

"Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key

"With bated breath, and whispering humbleness, &c.

A heavy heart, says the princess, does not admit of that verbal obeisance
which is paid by the humble to those whom they address. Farewell
therefore at once. MALONE.

7 —at his very loose,] At his very loose may mean, at the moment of
his parting, i. e. of his getting loose, or away from us. STEEVENS.

8 —which fain it would convince:] We must read—*which fain*
would it convince; that is, the entreaties of love which would fain
over-power grief. So Lady Macbeth declares, "That she will con-
vince the chamberlains with wine." JOHNSON.

Let not the cloud of sorrow justie it
 From what it purpos'd ; since, to wail friends lost,
 Is not by much so wholesome, profitable,
 As to rejoice at friends but newly found.

Prin. I understand you not ; my griefs are double ?

Bir. Honest plain words¹ best pierce the ear of grief ;—
 And by these badges understand the king.
 For your fair sakes have we neglected time,
 Play'd foul play with our oaths ; your beauty / ladies,
 Hath much deform'd us, fashioning our humours
 Even to the oppos'd end of our intents ;
 And what in us hath seem'd ridiculous,—
 As love is full of unbefitting strains ;
 All wanton as a child, skipping, and vain ;
 Form'd by the eye, and therefore like the eye,
 Full of strange shapes, of habits, and of forms²,

Varying

9 *I understand you not ; my griefs are double.*] I suppose, she means,
 1. on account of the death of her father ; 2. on account of not under-
 standing the king's meaning.—A modern editor, instead of *double*, says
deaf ; but the former is not at all likely to have been mistaken, either
 by the eye or the ear, for the latter. MALONE.

¹ *Honest plain words &c.*] As it seems not very proper for Biron to
 court the princess for the king in the king's presence at this critical mo-
 ment, I believe the speech is given to a wrong person. I read thus ;

Prin. I understand you not ; my griefs are double :

Honest plain words best pierce the ear of grief.

King. And by these badges, &c. JOHNSON.

Too many authors sacrifice propriety to the consequence of their prin-
 cipal character, into whose mouth they are willing to put more than
 justly belongs to him, or at least the best things they have to say. The
 original actor of Biron, however, like Bottom in the *Midsummer-Night's*
Dream, might have taken this speech out of the mouth of an inferior
 performer. STEEVENS.

In a former part of this scene Biron speaks for the king and the other lords,
 and being at length exhausted, tells them, they must woo for themselves.
 I believe, therefore, the old copies are right in this respect ; but think with
 Dr. Johnson that the line "*Honest &c.*" belongs to the princess. MALONE.

² *Full of strange shapes, of habits, and of forms,*] The old copies read
 —Full of *straying* shapes. Both the sense and the metre appear to me
 to require the emendation which I suggested some time ago. "*strange*
shapes" might have been easily confounded by the ear with the words
 that have been substituted in their room. In *Coriolanus* we meet with
 a corruption of the same kind, which could only have arisen in this way :

" — Better

Varying in subjects as the eye doth roll
To every varied object in his glance :
Which party-coated presence of loose love,
Put on by us, if, in your heavenly eyes,
Have misbecom'd our oaths and gravities,
Those heavenly eyes, that look into these faults,
Suggested us to make³ : Therefore, ladies,
Our love being yours, the error that love makes
Is likewise yours : we to ourselves prove false,
By being once false for ever to be true
To those that make us both,—fair ladies, you :
And even that falsehood, in itself a sin,
Thus purifies itself, and turns to grace.

Prin. We have receiv'd your letters, full of love :
Your favours, the ambassadors of love ;
And, in our maiden council, rated them
At courtship, pleasant jest, and courtesy,
As bombast and as lining to the time⁴ :
But more devout than this, in our respects⁵,

“ — Better to starve

“ Than crave the *higher* [hire] which first we do deserve.”

The following passages of our author will, I apprehend, fully support the correction that has been made :

“ In him a plenitude of subtle matter,

“ Applied to cantels, all *strange forms* receives.” *Lover's Complaint.*

Again, in the *Rape of Lucrece* :

“ — the *impression* of *strange* kinds

“ Is *form'd* in them, by force, by fraud, or skill.”

In *K. Henry V.* 4to. 1600, we have—*Foraging* blood of French nobility, instead of *Forage* in blood, &c. Mr. Capell, I find, has made the same emendation. MALONE.

³ *Suggested us—*] That is, *tempted us*. JOHNSON.

⁴ *As bombast and as lining to the time* :] This line is obscure. *Bombast* was a kind of loose texture not unlike what is now called *wadding*, used to give the dresses of that time bulk and protuberance, without much increase of weight ; whence the same name is given to a tumour of words unsupported by solid sentiment. The princess, therefore, says, that they considered this courtship as but *bombast*, as something to fill out life, which not being closely united with it, might be thrown away at pleasure. JOHNSON.

Prince Henry calls Falstaff, “ my sweet creature of *bombast*.” STEEV.

⁵ *But more devout than this, in our respects* :] In, which is wanting in the old copies, was added by Sir Thomas Hanmer. MALONE.

Have we not been ; and therefore met your loves
In their own fashion, like a merriment.

Dum. Our letters, madam, shew'd much more than jest.

Long. So did our looks.

Roj. We did not quote them so⁶.

King. Now, at the latest minute of the hour,
Grant us your loves.

Prin. A time, methinks, too short

To make a world-without-end bargain in⁷ :

No; no, my lord, your grace is perjur'd much ;

Full of dear guiltiness ; and, therefore, this —

If for my love (as there is no such cause)

You will do aught, this shall you do for me :

Your oath I will not trust ; but go with speed

To some forlorn and naked hermitage,

Remote from all the pleasures of the world⁸ ;

There stay, until the twelve celestial signs

Have brought about their annual reckoning :

If this austere insociable life

Change not your offer made in heat of blood ;

If frosts, and fasts, hard lodging, and thin weeds⁹ ;

Nip not the gaudy blossoms of your love,

But that it bear this trial, and last love⁹ ;

Then, at the expiration of the year,

Come challenge, challenge me by these deserts⁹ ;

And,

⁶ *We did not quote them so.*] In the old copies, — *cote* them. MALONE.

We should read, *quite*, *csteem*, *reckon*, though our old writers spelling by the ear, probably wrote *cote*, as it was pronounced. JOHNSON.

We did not *quote* 'em so, is, *we did not regard them as such*. So, in *Hamlet* :

" I'm sorry that with better heed and judgment

" I had not *quoted* him." See Act II. sc. i. STEEVENS.

⁷ *To make a world-without-end bargain in :*] This singular phrase, which Shakspeare borrowed probably from our Liturgy, occurs again in his 57th Sonnet :

" Nor dare I chide the *world-without-end* hour." MALONE.

⁸ — and *thin weeds*,] i. e. cloathing. MALONE.

⁹ — and *last love* ;] I suspect that the compositor caught this word from the preceding line, and that Shakspeare wrote — *last fill*. If the present reading be right, it must mean, — " if it continue still to deserve the name of love." MALONE.

⁹ *Come challenge, challenge me* —] The old copies read (probably by the

And by this virgin palm, now kissing thine,
I will bless thine; and, till that instant, shut
My woeful self up in a mourning house;
Raining the tears of lamentation,
For the remembrance of my father's death.
If this thou do deny, let our hands part;
Neither intitled in the other's heart².

King. If this, or more than this, I would deny,
To flatter up these powers of mine with rest,
The sudden hand of death close up mine eye!

Hence, ever then my heart is in thy breast.

Bir. And what to me my love? and what to me?

Ref. You must be purged too, your sins are rack'd³;
You are attaint with faults and perjury:
Therefore, if you my favour mean to get,
A twelve-month shall you spend, and never rest,
But seek the weary beds of people sick⁴.

Dum. But what to me, my love? but what to me?

Cath. A wife!—A beard, fair health, and honesty;
With three-fold love I wish you all these three.

Dum. O, shall I say, I thank you, gentle wife?

the com. actor's eye glancing on a wrong part of the line) Come challenge me, challenge me, &c. Corrected by Sir T. Hanmer. MALONE.

² Neither intitled in the other's heart.] Thus the folio. The quarto, 1598, reads intitled, which may be right; neither of us having a dwelling in the heart of the other.

Our author has the same kind of imagery in many other places. Thus, in the *Comedy of Errors*:

"Shall love in building grow so ruinate?

Again, in his *Lover's Complaint*:

"Love lack'd a dwelling, and made him her place."

Again, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*:

"O thou, that dost inhabit in my breast,

"Leave not the mansion so long tenantless,

"Left growing ruinous the building fall." MALONE.

³ — your sins are rack'd;] i. e. extended "to the top of their bent." So, in *Much ado about nothing*:

"Why, then we rack the value."

Mr. Rowe and the subsequent editors read—are rack. MALONE.

⁴ — of people sick.] Mr. Theobald and Dr. Warburton were of opinion that this and the five preceding lines though written by Shakespeare, were rejected by him, "he having executed the same thought a little lower with more spirit and elegance." MALONE.

Cath. Not so, my lord;—a twelve-month and a day
 I'll mark no words that smooth-fac'd wooers say;
 Come when the king doth to my lady come,
 Then, if I have much love, I'll give you some.

Dum. I'll serve thee true and faithfully till then.

Cath. Yet, swear not, lest you be forsworn again.

Long. What says Maria?

Mar. At the twelve-month's end, *

I'll change my black gown for a faithful friend.

Long. I'll stay with patience; but the time is long.

Mar. The liker you; few taller are so young;

Bir. Studies my lady? mistress, look on me,
 Behold the window of my heart, mine eye,
 What humble suit attends thy answer there;
 Impose some service on me for thy love.

Ros. Oft have I heard of you, my lord Birón,
 Before I saw you: and the world's large tongue
 Proclaims you for a man replete with mocks;
 Full of comparisons, and wounding flouts;
 Which you on all estates will execute,
 That lie within the mercy of your wit:
 To weed this wormwood from your fruitful brain,
 And, therewithal, to win me, if you please,
 (Without the which I am not to be won,)
 You shall this twelve-month term from day to day
 Visit the speechless sick, and still converse
 With groaning wretches; and your task shall be,
 With all the fierce endeavour of your wit^s,
 To enforce the pained impotent to smile.

Bir. To move wild laughter in the throat of death?
 It cannot be; it is impossible.
 Mirth cannot move a soul in agony.

Ros. Why that's the way to choke a gibing spirit,
 Whose influence is begot of that loose grace,
 Which shallow laughing hearers give to fools:
 A jest's prosperity lies in the ear
 Of him that hears it, never in the tongue

^s — fierce endeavour] Fierce is *wiehemment*, rapid. So, in *K. John*:
 " ———— fierce extremes of sickness." STEEVENS.

Of him that makes it: then, if sickly ears,
Deaf'd with the clamours of their own dear groans⁶,
Will hear your idle scorns, continue then,
And I will have you, and that fault withal;
But, if they will not, throw away that spirit,
And I shall find you empty of that fault,
Right joyful of your reformation.

Bir. A twelve-month? well, befall what will befall,
I'll jest a twelve-month in an hospital⁷.

Prin. Ay, sweet my lord; and so I take my leave.
[To the King.]

King. No, madam: we will bring you on your way.

Bir. Our wooing doth not end like an old play;
Jack hath not Jill: these ladies' courtesy
Might well have made our sport a comedy.

King. Come, sir; it wants a twelve-month and a day,
And then 'twill end.

Bir. That's too long for a play.

Enter ARMADO.

Arm. Sweet majesty, vouchsafe me,—

Prin. Was not that Hector?

Arm. The worthy knight of Troy.

Arm. I will kiss thy royal finger, and take leave: I am
a votary; I have vow'd to Jaquenetta to hold the plough
for her sweet love three year. But, most esteemed great-
ness, will you hear the dialogue that the two learned men
have compiled, in praise of the owl and the cuckoo? it
should have follow'd in the end of our show.

Long. Call them forth quickly, we will do so.

6 — *dear groans*,] *Dear* should here, as in many other places, be *dere*,
sad, odious. JOHNSON.

I believe *dear* in this place, as in many others, means only *immediate*,
consequential. So, already in this scene:

— full of *dear* guiltiness. STEEVENS.

7 The characters of *Biron* and *Rosaline*, suffer much by comparison
with those of *Benedick* and *Beatrice*. We know that *Love's Labour's*
Lost was the elder performance; and as our author grew more ex-
perienced in dramatic writing, he might have seen how much he could
improve on his own originals. To this circumstance, perhaps, we are
indebted for the more perfect comedy of *Much ado about nothing*. STEEV.

Arm.

Arm. Holla ! approach.—

Enter HOLOFERNES, NATHANIEL, MOTH, COSFARD,
and others.

This side is Hiems, winter ; this Ver, the spring ; the
one maintain'd by the owl, the other by the cuckoo.
Ver, begin.

S O N G.

Spr. When daisies pied, and violets blue*,
And lady-smocks all silver-white,
And cuckoo-buds* of yellow hue,
Do paint the meadows with delight,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks marry'd men, for thus sings he,
Cuckoo ;
Cuckoo, cuckoo,—O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a married ear !

* *When daisies pied, &c.*] The first lines of this song that were transposed, have been replaced by Mr. Theobald. JOHNSON.

9 *Cuckoo-buds*—] Gerrard in his *Herbal*, 1597, says, that the *flor cuculi*, cardamine, &c. are called “ in English cuckoo flowers, in Norfolk Canterbury bells, and at Nampton in Cheshire lady-smocks.” Shakespeare, however, might not have been sufficiently skilled in botany to be aware of this particular.

Mr. Tollet has observed that Lyte in his *Herbal*, 1578 and 1579, remarks, that *cowslips* are in French, of some called *coquu*, prime vere, and brayes de *coquu*. This he thinks will sufficiently account for our author's *cuckoo-buds*, by which he supposes *cowslip-buds* to be meant ; and further directs the reader to Cotgrave's *Dictionay*, under the articles—*Cocu*, and *herbe a coqu*. STEVENS.

Cuckoo buds must be wrong. I believe *cowslip-buds*, the true reading. FARMER.

Mr. Whalley, the learned editor of B. Jonson's works, many years ago proposed to read—*crocus buds*. The cuckoo-flower, he observed, could not be called *yellow*, it rather approaching to the colour of white, by which epithet, Cowley, who was himself no mean botanist, has distinguished it :

Albaque cardamine &c. MALONE.

II.

*When shepherds pipe on oaten straws,
And merry larks are plowmen's clocks,
When turtles tread, and rooks, and daws,
And maidens bleach their summer smocks,
The cuckoo then, on every tree,
Mocks married men, for thus sings he,
Cuckoo;*

*Cuckoo, cuckoo,—O word of fear,
Unpleasing to a marry'd ear!*

III.

*Win. When icicles hang by the wall¹,
And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
And Tom bears logs into the hall,
And milk comes frozen home in pail,
When blood is nipt, and ways be foul,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who;*

*Tu-whit, to-who, a merry note;
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot².*

¹ *When icicles hang by the wall,*] i. e. from the eaves of the thatch or other roofing, from which in the morning icicles are found depending in great abundance, after a night of frost. So, in *K. Henry IV*:

"Let us not hang like roping icicles,
Upon our houses' thatch."

Our author (whose images are all taken from nature) has alluded in *the Tempest*, to the drops of water that after rain flow from such coverings, in their natural unfrozen state:

"His tears run down his beard, like winter's drops
From eaves of reeds." MALONE.

² — *doth keel the pot.*] To keel the pot is to cool it, but in a particular manner: it is to stir the pottage with the ladle to prevent the boiling over. FARMER.

Mr. Lambe observes in his notes on the ancient metrical History of the *Battle of Flodden*, that it is a common thing in the North "for a maid servant to take out of a boiling pot a *wooben*, i. e. a small quantity, viz. a porringer or two of broth, and then to fill up the pot with cold water. The broth thus taken out, is called the *keeling wooben*. In this manner greasy Joan keeled the pot." STEEVENS.

IV. *When*

IV.

*When all aloud the wind doth blow,
And coughing drowns the parson's saw³,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl⁴,
Then nightly sings the staring owl,
To-who;*

*Tu-whit, to-who, a merry note,
While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.*

Arm. The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo. You, that way; we, this way⁵. *[Exeunt.]*

3 — *the parson's saw,*] *Saw* seems anciently to have meant, not as at present, a proverb, a sentence, but the whole tenor of any instructive discourse. So, in the *Tragedies of John Bochus*, translated by Lidgate, b.i.c.4.

"These old poetes in their sawes swete

"Full covertly in their veries do fayne, &c." STEEVENS.

Yet in *As you like it*, p. 198. our author uses this word in the sense of a sentence, or maxim: "Dead shepherd, now I find thy *saw* of might, &c." It is, I believe, so used here. MALONE.

4 *When roasted crabs, &c.*] *Crabs* are crab-apples. MALONE.

So, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*:

"And sometimes lurk I in a gossip's bowl,

"In very likeness of a roasted crab." STEEVENS.

5 In this play, which all the editors have concurred to censure, and some have rejected as unworthy of our poet, it must be confessed that there are many passages mean, childish, and vulgar: and some which ought not to have been exhibited, as we are told they were, to a maiden queen. But there are scattered through the whole many sparks of genius; nor is there any play that has more evident marks of the hand of Shakspeare. JOHNSON.

ACT I. SCENE I. Page 315.

This child of fancy, that Armado bringeth, &c.] This, as I have shewn in the note in its place, relates to the stories in the books of chivalry. A few words, therefore, concerning their origin and nature, may not be unacceptable to the reader. As I don't know of any writer, who has given any tolerable account of this matter: and especially as monsieur Huet, the bishop of Avranches, who wrote a formal treatise of the Origin of Romances, has said little or nothing of these in that superficial work. For having brought down the account of romances to the later Greeks, and entered upon those composed by the barbarous western writers, which have now the name of Romances almost appropriated to them, he puts the change upon his reader, and instead of giving us an account

account of these books of chivalry, one of the most curious and interesting parts of the subject he promised to treat of, he contents himself with a long account of the poems of the Provincial writers, called likewise romances; and so, under the *equivocal* of a common term, drops his proper subject, and entertains us with another, that had no relation to it more than in the name.

The Spaniards were of all others the fondest of these fables, as suiting best their extravagant turn to gallantry and bravery; which in time grew so excessive, as to need all the efficacy of Cervantes's incomparable satire to bring them back to their senses. The French suffered an easier cure from their doctor Rabelais, who enough discredited the books of chivalry, by only using the extravagant stories of its giants, &c. as a cover for another kind of satire against the *refined politicks* of his countrymen; on which they were as much possessed as the Spaniards of their *romantick bravery*: a *bravery* our Shakspeare makes their characteristic in this description of a Spanish gentleman:

*A man of complements, whom right and wrong
Have chose as umpire of their mutiny:
This child of fancy, that Armado hight,
For interim to our studies, shall relate,
In high-born words, the worth of many a knight,
From tawny Spain, lost in the world's debate.*

The sense of which is to this effect: *This gentleman*, says the speaker, *shall relate to us the celebrated stories recorded in the old romances, and in their very file.* Why he says from *tawny Spain*, is because these romances, being of the Spanish original, the heroes and the scene were generally of that country. He says, *lost in the world's debate*, because the subjects of those romances were the crusades of the European Christians against the Saracens of Asia and Africa.

Indeed, the wars of the Christians against the Pagans were the general subject of the romances of chivalry. They all seem to have had their ground-work in two fabulous monkish historians: the one, who under the name of Turpin, archbishop of Rheims, wrote the History and Achievements of Charlemagne and his Twelve Peers; to whom, instead of his father, they assigned the task of driving the Saracens out of France and the south parts of Spain: the other, our Geoffroy of Monmouth.

Two of those peers, whom the old romances have rendered most famous, were Oliver and Rowland. Hence Shakspeare makes Alençon, in the first part of Henry VI. say: "Froyssard, a countryman of ours, records, England all Olivers and Rowlands bred, during the time Edward the third did reign." In the Spanish romance of *Bernardo del Carpio*, and in that of *Roncesvalles*, the feats of Roland are recorded under the name of *Roldan el encantador*; and in that of *Palmerin de Oliva*,

or
Dr. Warburton is quite mistaken in deriving Oliver from (Palmerin de) Oliva, which is utterly incompatible with the genius of the Spanish language. The old romance, of which Oliver was the hero is entitled in Spanish, "Historias de los nobles Cavalleros Oliveros de Castilla, y Artus de Algarbe, in fol. en Valladolid 1501. in fol. en Sevilla, 1507;" and in French thus, "Histoire d'Olivier de Castille, & Artus d'Algarbe son loyal compaignon, & de Helaine, Fille au Roy d'Angleterre, &c. traduite du Latin par Phil. Kameu," in fol. Gothique. It has also appeared in English. See Ames's Typograph. p. 47. P. E. C. T.

or simply *Oliva*, those of Oliver: for *Oliva* is the same in Spanish as *Olivier* is in French. The account of their exploits is in the highest degree monstrous and extravagant, as appears from the judgment passed upon them by the priest in *Don Quixote*, when he delivers the knight's library to the secular arm of the house-keeper, "Eccetuando à un Bernardo del Carpio que anda por ay, y à otro llamado Roncesvalles; que estos en llegando a mis manos, an de estar en las de la ama, y dellas en las del fuego sin remission alguna *." And of Oliver he says, "essa Oliva se haga luego raxas, y se queme, que aun no queden della las cenizas †." The reasonableness of this sentence may be partly seen from one story in the *Bernardo del Carpio*, which tells us, that the cleft called Roldan, to be seen in the summit of an high mountain in the kingdom of Valencia, near the town of Alicant, was made with a single back-stroke of that hero's broad-sword. Hence came the proverbial expression of our plain and sensible ancestors, who were much cooler readers of these extravagances than the Spaniards, of giving one a *Roland* for his *Oliver*, that is of matching one impossible lye with another: as, in French, *faire le Roland* means, to swagger. This driving the Saracens out of France and Spain, was, as we say, the subject of the elder romances. And the first that was printed in Spain was the famous *Amadis de Gaula*, of which the inquisitor priest says: "segun he oydo dezir, este libro sué el primero de Cavallerias qui se imprimiò en Espana, y todos los demas an tomado principio y origen deste §," and for which he humourously condemns it to the fire, *coma à Dogmatizador de una secta tan mala*. When this subject was well exhausted, the affairs of Europe afforded them another of the same nature. For after that the western parts had pretty well cleared themselves of these inhospitable guests; by the excitements of the popes, they carried their arms against them into Greece and Asia, to support the Byzantine empire, and recover the holy sepulchre. This gave birth to a new tribe of romances, which we may call of the second race or class. And as *Amadis de Gaula* was at the head of the first, so, correspondently to the subject, *Amadis de Græcia* was at the head of the latter. Hence it is, we find, that Trebizonde is as celebrated in these romances as Roncesvalles is in the other. It may be worth observing, that the two famous Italian epic poets, Ariosto and Tasso, have borrowed, from each of these classes of old romances, the scenes and subjects of their several stories: Ariosto choosing the first, *the Saracens in France and Spain*; and Tasso, the latter, *the Crusade against them in Asia*: Ariosto's hero being Orlando, or the French *Roland*; for as the Spaniards, by one way of transposing the letters, had made it *Roldan*, so the Italians, by another, make it *Orland*.

The main subject of these fooleries, as we have said, had its original in Turpin's famous History of Charlemagne and his Twelve Peers. Nor were the monstrous embellishments of enchantments, &c. the invention of the romancers, but formed upon eastern tales, brought thence by travellers from their crusades and pilgrimages; which indeed

have

* E. i. c. 6.

† Ibid.

§ Ibid.

have a cast peculiar to the wild imaginations of the eastern people. We have a proof of this in the travels of sir J. Maundevile, whose excessive superstition and credulity, together with an impudent monkish addition to his genuine work, have made his veracity thought much worse of than it deserved. This voyager, speaking of the isle of Cais in the Archipelago, tells the following story of an enchanted dragon. "And also a zonge man, that wist not of the dragoun, went out of the schipp, and went throughe the isle, till that he cam to the castelle, and cam into the cave; and went so longe till that he fond a chambre, and there he saughe a damyselle, that kembed hire hede, and lokede in a myrour; and sche hadde moche tresoure abouten hire: and she trowed that sche hadde ben a comoun woman, that dwelled there to receive men to folye. And he abode till the damyselle saughe the schadowe of him in the myrour. And sche turned hire toward him, and asked him what he wolde. And he seyde, he wolde ben hire limman or paramour. And sche asked him, if that he were a knyghte. And he sayde, nay. And then sche sayde, that he might not ben hire limman. But sche bad him gon azen unto his felowes, and make him knyghte, and come azen upon the morwe, and sche scholde come out of her cava before him; and thanne come and kysse hire on the mowth and have no drede. For I schalle do the no maner harm, alle be it that thou see me in lykenes of a dragoun. For thoughe thou see me hideouse and horrible to loken onne, I do the to wytene that it is made be enchauntement. For withouten doubte, I am none other than thou seest now, a woman; and herefore drede the noughte. And yf thou kysse me, thou schalt have all this tresoure, and be my lord, and lord also of all that isle. And he departed &c." p. 29, 30. ed. 1725. Here we see the very spirit of a romance adventure. This honest traveller believed it all, and so, it seems did the people of the isle. "And some men seyne (says he) that in the isle of Lango is zit the doughtre of Ypodras in forme and lykenesse of a gret dragoun, that is an hundred fadme in lengthe, as men seyn: for I have not seen hire. And they of the isles callen hire, lady of the land." We are not to think then, these kind of stories, believed by pilgrims and travellers, would have less credit either with the writers or readers of romances: which humour of the times therefore may well account for their birth and favourable reception in the world.

The other monkish historian, who supplied the romancers with materials, was our Geoffrey of Monmouth. For it is not to be supposed, that these children of fancy (as Shakspere in the place quoted above, finely calls them, insinuating that fancy hath its infancy as well as manhood,) should stop in the midst of so extraordinary a career, or confine themselves within the lists of the *terra firma*. From him therefore the Spanish romances took the story of the British Arthur, and the knights of his round table, his wife Gueniver, and his conjurer Merlin. But still it was the same subject, (essential to books of chivalry,) the wars of Christians against Infidels. And, whether it was by blunder or design, they changed the Saxons into Saracens, I suspect by design; for chivalry

valry without a Saracen was so very lame and imperfect a thing, that even the wooden image, which turned round on an axis, and served the knights to try their swords, and break their lances upon, was called by the Italians and Spaniards, *Sarizino* and *Sarazino*; so closely were these two ideas connected.

In these old romances there was much religious superstition mixed with their other extravagancies; as appears even from their very names and titles. The first romance of Lancelot of the Lake and King Arthur and his Knights, is called the History of Saint Greal. This saint Greal was the famous relic of the holy blood pretended to be collected into a vessel by Joseph of Arimathea. So another is called Kyrie Eleison of Montauban. For in those days Deuteronomy & Paralipomenon were supposed to be the names of holy men. And as they made saints of their knights-errant, so they made knights-errant of their tutelary saints; and each nation advanced its own into the order of chivalry. Thus every thing in those times being either a saint or a devil, they never wanted for the *marvellous*. In the old romance of Launcelot of the Lake, we have the doctrine and discipline of the church as formally delivered as in Bellarmine himself. "La confession (says the preacher) ne vaut rien si le cœur n'est repentant; et si tu es moult & cloigné de l'amour de nostre Seigneur, tu ne peux estre recordé si non par trois choses: premierement par la confession de bouche; secondement par une contrition de cœur; tiercement par peine de cœur, & par oeuvre d'aumône & charité. Telle est la droite voye d'aimer Dieu. Or va & si te confesse en cette maniere & recois la discipline des mains de tes confesseurs, car c'est le signe de merite." — Or mande le roy ses evesques, dont grandepartie avoit en l'ost, & vinrent tous en sa chapelle. Le roy vint devant eux tout nud en pleurant, & tenant son plein point de vint menuës verges, si les jetta devant eux, & leur dit en soupirant, qu'ils prissent de luy vengeance, car je suis le plus vil pecheur, &c. — Apres prinst discipline & d'eux & moult doucement la receut." Hence we find the divinity lectures of Don Quixote and the penance of his squire, are both of them in the ritual of chivalry. Lastly, we find the knight-errant, after much turmoil to himself, and disturbance to the world, frequently ended his course, like Charles V. of Spain, in a monastery; or turned hermit, and became a saint in good earnest. And this again will let us into the spirit of those dialogues between Sancho and his master, where it is gravely debated whether he should not turn saint or archbishop.

There were several causes of this strange jumble of nonsense and religion. As first, the nature of the subject, which was a religious war or crusade: secondly, the quality of the first writers, who were religious men; and thirdly, the end of writing many of them, which was to carry on a religious purpose. We learn, that Clement V. interdicted jousts and tournaments, because he understood they had much hindered the crusade decreed in the council of Vienna. "Tēpeamenta ipsa & hastiludia sive juxtas in regnis Franciæ, Angliæ, & Almanniæ, & aliis nonnullis provinciis, in quibus ea consueverē frequētiūs exerceri, specialiter

"*specialiter interdixit.*" *Extrav. de Torneamentis C. unic. temp. Ed. I.* Religious men, I conceive, therefore, might think to forward the design of the crusades by turning the fondness for tilts and tournaments into that channel. Hence we see the books of knight-errantry so full of solemn jousts and tournaments held at Trebizonde, Bizance, Tripoly, &c. Which wise project, I apprehend, it was Cervantes's intention to ridicule; where he makes his knight propose it as the best means of subduing the Turk, to assemble all the knights errant together by proclamation*. **WARBURTON.**

It is generally agreed, I believe, that this long note of Dr. Warburton's is, at least, very much misplaced. There is not a single passage in the character of *Armado*, that has the least relation to any story in any romance of chivalry. With what propriety therefore a dissertation upon the origin and nature of those romances is here introduced, I cannot see; and I should humbly advise the next editor of Shakspeare to omit it. That he may have the less scruple upon that head, I shall take this opportunity of throwing out a few remarks, which, I think, will be sufficient to shew, that the learned writer's hypothesis was formed upon a very hasty and imperfect view of the subject.

At setting out, in order to give a greater value to the information which is to follow, he tells us, that no other writer has given any tolerable account of this matter; and particularly,—that "*Monsieur Huet, the bishop of Avranches, who wrote a formal treatise of the Origin of Romances, has said little or nothing of these [books of chivalry] in that superficial work.*"—The fact is true, that *Monsieur Huet* has said very little of Romances of chivalry; but the imputation, with which Dr. W. proceeds to load him, of—"putting the change upon his reader," and "dropping his proper subject" for another, "that had no relation to it more than in the name," is unfounded.

It appears plainly from *Huet's* introductory address to *De Segrain*, that his object was to give some account of those romances which were then popular in France, such as the *Astree* of *D'Urfé*, the *Grand Cyrus* of *De Scudéri* &c. He defines the Romances of which he means to treat, to be "*fiCTIONS des aventures amoureuses*;" and he excludes epic poems from the number, because—"Enfin les poëmes ont pour sujet une action militaire ou politique, et ne traitent d'amour que par occasion; les Romans au contraire ont l'amour pour sujet principal, et ne traitent la politique et la guerre que par incident. J. parle des Romans réguliers; car la plupart des vieux Romans François, Italiens, et Espagnols sont bien moins amoureux que militaires." After this declaration, surely no one has a right to complain of the author for not treating more at large of the old romances of chivalry, or to stigmatise his work as superficial, upon account of that omission. I shall have occasion to remark below, that Dr. W. who, in turning over this superficial work, (as he is pleased to call it) seems to have shut his eyes against every ray of good sense and just observation, has condescended to borrow from it a very gross mistake.

* See Part II. l. 5. c. 1.



Dr. W's own positions, to the support of which his subsequent facts and arguments might be expected to apply, are two; 1. *That Romances of chivalry being of Spanish original, the heroes and the scene were generally of that country*; 2. *That the subject of these romances were the crusades of the European Christians against the Saracens of Asia and Africa*. The first position, being complicated, should be divided into the two following; 1. *That romances of chivalry were of Spanish original*; 2. *That the heroes and the scene of them were generally of that country*.

Here are therefore three positions, to which I shall say a few words in their order; but I think it proper to premise a sort of definition of a Romance of Chivalry. If Dr. W. had done the same, he must have seen the hazard of systematizing in a subject of such extent, upon a cursory perusal of a few modern books, which indeed ought not to have been quoted in the discussion of a question of antiquity.

A romance of chivalry therefore, according to my notion, is any fabulous narration, in verse or prose, in which the principal characters are knights, conducting themselves, in their several situations and adventures, agreeably to the institutions and customs of Chivalry. Whatever names the characters may bear, whether historical or fictitious; and in whatever country, or age, the scene of the action may be laid, if the actors are represented as knights, I should call such a fable a Romance of Chivalry.

I am not aware that this definition is more comprehensive than it ought to be: but, let it be narrowed ever so much; let any other be substituted in its room; Dr. W's first position, *that romances of chivalry were of Spanish original*, cannot be maintained. Monsieur Huet would have taught him better. He says very truly, that "*les plus vieux*," of the Spanish romances, "*sont postérieurs à nos Tristans et à nos Lancelots, de quelques centaines d'années*." Indeed the fact is indisputable. Cervantes, in a passage quoted by Dr. W. speaks of *Amadis de Gaula* (the first four books) as the *first book of chivalry printed in Spain*. Though he says only *printed*, it is plain that he means *written*. And indeed there is no good reason to believe that *Amadis* was written long before it was printed. It is unnecessary to enlarge upon a system, which places the original of romances of chivalry in a nation, which has none to produce older than the art of printing.

Dr. W's second position, *that the heroes and the scene of these romances were generally of the country of Spain*, is as unfortunate as the former. Whoever will take the second volume of *Du Fresnoy's Bibliothèque des Romans*, and look over his lists of *Romans de Chevalerie*, will see that not one of the celebrated heroes of the old romances was a Spaniard. With respect to the general scene of such irregular and capricious fictions, the writers of which were used, literally, to "give to airy nothing, a local habitation and a name," I am sensible of the impropriety of asserting any thing positively, without an accurate examination of many more of them than have fallen in my way. I think, however, I might venture to assert, in direct contradiction to Dr. W. that the scene of them was *not generally* in Spain. My own notion is, that

that it was very rarely there; except in those few romances which treat expressly of the affair at Roncesvalles.

His last position, that the subject of these romances were the crusades of the European Christians, against the Saracens of Asia and Africa, might be admitted with a small amendment. If it stood thus; the subject of some, or a few, of these romances were the crusades, &c. the position would have been incontrovertible; but then it would not have been either new, or fit to support a system.

After this state of Dr. W.'s hypothesis, one must be curious to see what he himself has offered in proof of it. Upon the two first positions he says not one word: I suppose he intended that they should be received as axioms. He begins his illustration of his third position, by repeating it (*with a little change of terms*, for a reason which will appear). "Indeed the wars of the Christians against the Pagans were the general subject of the romances of chivalry. They all seem to have had their ground-work in two fabulous monkish historians, the one, who, under the name of Turpin, archbishop of Rheims, wrote the History and Achievements of Charlemagne and his twelve Peers;—the other, our Geoffry of Monmouth." Here we see the reason for changing the terms of crusades and Saracens into wars and Pagans; for, though the expedition of Charles into Spain, as related by the Pseudo-Turpin, might be called a crusade against the Saracens, yet, unluckily, our Geoffry has nothing like a crusade, nor a single Saracen in his whole history: which indeed ends before Mahomet was born. I must observe too, that the speaking of Turpin's history under the title of "*the History of the Achievements of Charlemagne and his twelve Peers*," is inaccurate and unscholarlike, as the fiction of a limited number of twelve peers is of a much later date than that history.

However, the ground-work of the romances of chivalry being thus marked out and determined, one might naturally expect some account of the first builders and their edifices; but instead of that we have a digression upon *Oliver and Roland*, in which an attempt is made to say something of those two famous characters, not from the old romances, but from Shakspeare, and Don Quixote, and some modern Spanish romances. My learned friend, the dean of Carlisle, has taken notice of the strange mistake of Dr. W. in supposing that the feats of *Oliver* were recorded under the name of *Palmerin de Oliva*; a mistake, into which no one could have fallen, who had read the first page of the book. And I very much suspect that there is a mistake, though of less magnitude, in the assertion, that, "*in the Spanish romance of Bernardo del Carpio, and in that of Roncesvalles, the feats of Roland are recorded under the name of Roldan el Encantador*." Dr. W.'s authority for this assertion was, I apprehend, the following passage of Cervantes, in the first chapter of *Don Quixote*. "*Mejor estava con Bernardo del Carpio porque en Roncesvalles avia muerto à Roldan el Encantado, valiendo de la industria de Mercurio, quando abegò à Anteon el hijo de la Tierra entre los brazos*." Where it is observable, that Cervantes does not appear to speak of more than one romance; he calls *Roldan el encantado*, and

not *el encantador*; and moreover the word *encantado* is not to be understood as an addition to Roldan's name, but merely as a participle, expressing that he was *enchanted*, or *made invulnerable by enchantment*.

But this is a small matter. And perhaps *encantador* may be an error of the press for *encantado*. From this digression Dr. W. returns to the subject of the old romances in the following manner. "*This driving the Saracens out of France and Spain, was, as we say, the subject of the elder romances. And the first that was printed in Spain was the famous Amadis de Gaula.*" According to all common rules of construction, I think the latter sentence must be understood to imply, that *Amadis de Gaula* was one of the elder romances, and that the subject of it was the driving of the Saracens out of France or Spain; whereas, for the reasons already given, *Amadis*, in comparison with many other romances, must be considered as a very modern one; and the subject of it has not the least connexion with any driving of the Saracens whatsoever.—But what follows is still more extraordinary. "*When this subject was well exhausted, the affairs of Europe afforded them another of the same nature. For after that the western parts had pretty well cleared themselves of these inhospitable guests; by the excitements of the popes, they carried their arms against them into Greece and Asia, to support the Byzantine empire, and recover the holy sepulchre. This gave birth to a new tribe of romances, which we may call of the second race or class. And as Amadis de Gaula was at the head of the first, so, correspondently to the subject, Amadis de Græcia was at the head of the latter.*"—It is impossible, I apprehend, to refer *this subject* to any antecedent but that in the paragraph last quoted, viz. the driving of the Saracens out of France and Spain. So that, according to one part of the hypothesis here laid down, the subject of the driving the Saracens out of France and Spain, was well exhausted by the old romances (with *Amadis de Gaula* at the head of them) before the Crusades; the first of which is generally placed in the year 1095: and, according to the latter part, the crusades happened in the interval between *Amadis de Gaula*, and *Amadis de Græcia*; a space of twenty, thirty, or at most fifty years, to be reckoned backwards from the year 1532, in which year an edition of *Amadis de Græcia* is mentioned by Du Fresnoy. What induced Dr. W. to place *Amadis de Græcia* at the head of his second race or class of romances, I cannot guess. The fact is, that *Amadis de Græcia* is no more concerned in supporting the Byzantine empire, and recovering the holy sepulchre, than *Amadis de Gaula* in driving the Saracens out of France and Spain. And a still more pleasant circumstance is, that *Amadis de Græcia*, through more than nine tenths of his history, is himself a declared Pagan.

And here ends Dr. W.'s account of the old romances of chivalry, which he supposes to have had their ground-work in Turpin's history. Before he proceeds to the others, which had their ground-work in our Geoffrey, he interposes a curious solution of a puzzling question concerning the origin of lying in romances.—"*Nor were the monstrous embellishments of enchantments, &c. the invention of the romancer, but formed upon eastern tales, brought thence by travellers from their Crusades and pilgrimages;*

of the images, which indeed have a cast peculiar to the wild imaginations of the eastern people. We have a proof of this in the Travels of Sir J. Maundevile.—He then gives us a story of an enchanted dragon in the title of Cos, from Sir J. Maundevile, who wrote his Travels in 1356; by way of proof, that the tales of enchantments &c. which had been current here in romances of chivalry for above two hundred years before, were brought by travellers from the East! The proof is certainly not conclusive. On the other hand, I believe it would be easy to shew, that, at the time when romances of chivalry began, our Europe had a very sufficient stock of lies of her own growth, to furnish materials for every variety of monstrous embellishment. At most times, I conceive, and in most countries, imported lies are rather for luxury than necessity.

Dr. W. comes now to that other ground-work of the old romances, our *Geoffry of Monmouth*. And him he dispatches very shortly, because, as has been observed before, it is impossible to find anything in him to the purpose of *crusades*, or *Saracens*. Indeed, in treating of Spanish romances, it must be quite unnecessary to say much of *Geoffry*, as, whatever they have of "*the British Artbur and his conjurer Merlin*," is of so late a fabrick, that, in all probability, they took it from the more modern Itals. In romances, and not from *Geoffry's* own book. As to the doubt, "*whether it was by blunder or design that they chang'd the Saxons into Saracens*," I should wish to postpone the consideration of it, till we have some Spanish romance before us, in which king *Artbur* is introduced carrying on a war against *Saracens*.

And thus, I think, I have gone through the several facts and arguments, which Dr. W. has advanced in support of his third position. In support of his two first positions, as I have observed already, he has said nothing; and indeed nothing can be said. The remainder of his note contains another hypothesis concerning the strange jumble of nonsense and religion in the old romances, which I shall not examine. The reader, I presume, by this time is well aware, that Dr. W.'s information upon this subject is to be received with caution. I shall only take a little notice of one or two facts, with which he sets out—"In these old romances there was much religious superstition mixed with their other extravagancies; as appears even from their very names and titles. The first romance of *Lancelot of the Lake and King Artbur and his knights* is called the History of Saint Graal.—So another is called *Kyrie eleison of Montaubon*. For in those days *Deuteronomy* and *Paralipomenon* were supposed to be the names of holy men.—I believe no one, who has ever looked into the common romance of king *Artbur*, will be of opinion, that the part relating to the *Saint Graal* was the first romance of *Lancelot of the Lake and King Artbur and his Knights*. And as to the other supposed to be called *Kyrie eleison of Montaubon*, there is no reason to believe that any romance with that title ever existed. This is the mistake, which, as was hinted above, Dr. W. appears to have borrowed from *Huet*. The reader will judge. *Huet* is giving an account of the romances in *Don Quixote's* library, which the curate and barber saved

from the flames.—“*Ceux qu' ils jugent dignes d' estre gardez sont les quatre livres d' Amadis de Gaule, Palmerin d' Angleterre, Don Belianis; le miroir de chevalerie; Tirante le Blanc, et Kyrie eleison de Montauban (car au bon vieux temps on croyoit que Kyrie eleison et Paralipomenon estoient les noms de quelques saints) où les subtilitez de la Damoiselle Plaisir-de-ma-vie, et les tromperies de la Veuve reposée, sont fort louées.*”—It is plain, I think, that Dr. W. copied what he says of *Kyrie eleison of Montauban*, as well as the witticism in his last sentence, from this passage of Huet, though he has improved upon his original by introducing a *saint Deuteronomy*, upon what authority I know not. It is still more evident (from the passage of Cervantes, which is quoted below *) that Huet was mistaken in supposing *Kyrie eleison de Montauban* to be the name of a separate romance. He might as well have made *La Damoiselle Plaisir-de-ma-vie* and *La Veuve reposée* the names of separate romances. All three are merely characters in the romance of *Tirante le Blanc*.—And so much for Dr. W.'s account of the origin and nature of romances of chivalry. TYRWHITT.

No future editor of Shakspeare will, I believe, readily consent to omit the dissertation here examined, though it certainly has no more relation to the play before us, than to any other of our author's dramas. Mr. Tyrwhitt's judicious observations upon it have given it a value which it certainly had not before; and I think I may venture to foretell, that Dr. Warburton's futile performance, like the pismire which Martial tells us was accidentally incruited with amber, will be ever preserved, for the sake of the admirable comment in which it is now enshrined.

—quæ fuerat vitâ contempta manente,

Funeribus facta est nunc pretiosa suis. MALONE.

* Don Quix. lib. i. c. 6. “*Valame Dios, dixo el Cura, dando una gran voz, que aqui este Tirante el Blanco! Dadmele aca, compadre, que hago cuenta que he hallado en el un tesoro de contento, y una mina de pasatiempos. Aqui esta Don Quixote de Montalvan, valeroso Cavallero, y su hermano Tomas de Montalvan, y el Cavallero Fonseca, con la batalla que le valiente Detriante [r. de Tirante] hizo con el alano, y las agudezas de la Donzella Plazer de mi vida, con los amores y embustes de la viuda Reposada, y la Señora Emperatriz, enamorada de Hipolito su escudero.*”

Aqui esta Don Quixote de Montalvan &c. HERE, i. e. in this romance of Tirante el Blanco, is Don Quixote de Montalvan &c.

A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

Persons Represented.

Theseus, *Duke of Athens.*
 Egeus, *Father to Hermia.*
 Lysander, } *in love with Hermia.*
 Demetrius, }
 Philostrate, *Master of the Revels to Theseus.*
 Quince, *the Carpenter.*
 Snug, *the Joiner.*
 Bottom, *the Weaver.*
 Flute, *the Bellows-mender.*
 Snowt, *the Tinker.*
 Starveling, *the Tailor.*

Hippolita, *Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.*
 Hermia, *Daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.*
 Helena, *in love with Demetrius.*

Oberon, *King of the Fairies.*
 Titania, *Queen of the Fairies.*
 Puck, or Robin-goodfellow, *a Fairy.*

Peaseblossom, }
 Cobweb, } *Fairies.*
 Moth, }
 Mustard-seed, }

Pyramus, }
 Thisbe, } *Characters in the Interlude performed by*
 Wall, } *the Clowns.*
 Moonshine, }
 Lion, }

Other Fairies attending their King and Queen.
Attendants on Theseus and Hippolita.

SCENE, *Athens, and a Wood not far from it.*

MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Athens. *A Room in the Palace of Theseus.*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLITA, PHILOSTRATE, and Attendants.

The. Now, fair Hippolita, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon: but, oh, methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes; she lingers my desires,

¹ This play was entered at Stationers' Hall, Oct. 8, 1600, by Thomas Fisher. It is probable that the hint for it was received from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*. Thence it is, that our author speaks of Theseus as duke of Athens. The tale begins thus; late edit. v. 861:

"Whilom as olde stories tellen us,

"There was a Duk that lighte Theseus,

"Of Athenes he was lord and governour, &c."

Lidgate too, the monk of Bury, in his translation of the *Tragedies of John Bochas*, calls him by the same title, chap. xii. l. 21.

"Duke Theseus had the victorie."

Creon, in the tragedy of *Jocasta*, translated from *Euripides* in 1566, is called *Duke Creon*. So likewise Skelton:

"Not lyke *Duke* Hamilcar,

"Nor like *Duke* Ardruball."

I have been informed that the original of Shakspeare's *Oberon* and *Titanis* are to be sought in the ancient French Romance of *Huon de Bourdeaux*. STEEVENS.

Mr. Warton remarks, (*Observat. on Spenser's F. Q.* v. ii. 138,) that "this romance is mentioned among other old histories of the same kind in Laneham's Letter, concerning Queen Elizabeth's Entertainment at Kenelworth Castle. It is entitled *The famous exploits of Sir Hugh of Bourdeaux*, and was translated from the French by John Bouchier, Lord Berners, in the reign of Henry VIII."

The *Midsummer-Night's Dream* I suppose to have been written in 1592. See *An Attempt to ascertain the order of Shakspeare's Plays*, Vol. I.

MALONE.

Like

Like to a step-dame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a young man's revenue².

Hip. Four days will quickly steep themselves in nights;
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow
New bent³ in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities. *pretty solemn* *Nm*

The. Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth;
Turn melancholy forth to funerals,
The pale companion is not for our pomp.— [*Exit Phi.*
Hippolita, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And won thy love, doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling⁴.

Enter EGEUS, HERMIA, LYSANDER, and DECEMETRIUS.

Ege. Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke!

The. Thanks, good Egeus: What's the news with thee?

Ege. Full of vexation come I, with complaint

² *Like to a stepdame, or a dowager,
Long withering out a young man's revenue.]*
— Ut piger annus

Pupillis, quos dura premit custodia matrum,
Sic mihi tarda fluunt ingrataque tempora. *HOR. MALONE.*

³ *New bent—*] The old copies read—*New bent.* Corrected by Mr. ROWE. MALONE.

⁴ *With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.]* By triumph, as Mr. Warton has observed in his late edition of *Milton's POEMS*, p. 56, we are to understand *shows*, such as masks, revels, &c. So, again in *King Henry VI.* P. III:

“ And now what rests, but that we spend the time

“ With stately triumphs, mirthful comick shows,

“ Such as best the pleasures of the court.”

Again in the preface to Burton's *Anatomie of Melancholy*, 1624:
“ Now come tidings of weddings, maskings, mummeries, entertainments, trophies, triumphs, revels, sports, playes.” Jonson, as the same gentleman observes, in the title of his masque called *Love's triumph through Callipolis*, by triumph seems to have meant a grand procession; and in one of the stage-directions, it is said, “ the triumph is seen far off.” MALONE.

Against

Against my child, my daughter Hermia.—
 Stand forth, Demetrius;—My noble lord,
 This man hath my consent to marry her:—
 Stand forth, Lyfander;—and, my gracious duke,
 This hath bewitch'd⁵ the bosom of my child:
 Thou, thou, Lyfander, thou hast given her rhimes,
 And interchang'd love-tokens with my child:
 Thou hast by moon-light at her window sung,
 With feigning voice, verses of feigning love;
 And stol'n the impression of her fantasy
 With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds⁶, conceits,
 Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweet-meats; messengers
 Of strong prevailment in unharden'd youth:
 With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart;
 Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,
 To stubborn harshness:—And, my gracious duke,
 Be it so she will not here before your grace
 Consent to marry with Demetrius,
 I beg the ancient privilege of Athens;
 As she is mine, I may dispose of her:
 Which shall be either to this gentleman,
 Or to her death; according to our law⁷,
 Immediately provided in that case.

The. What say you, Hermia? be advis'd, fair maid;
 To you your father should be as a god;
 One that compos'd your beauties; yea, and one
 To whom you are but as a form in wax,

⁵ *This hath bewitch'd*—] The old copies read—*This man* hath bewitch'd—. The emendation was made for the sake of the metre, by the editor of the second folio. It is very probable that the compositor caught the word *man* from the line above. MALONE.

⁶ — *gawds*,—] i. e. baubles, toys, trifles. Our author has the word frequently. The rev. Mr. Lambe in his notes on the ancient metrical history of the *Battle of Flodden*, observes that a *gawd* is a *child's toy*, and that the children in the North call their play-things *gawds*, and their baby-house a *gawdy-house*. STEEVENS.

⁷ *Or to her death; according to our law*,—] By a law of Solon's, parents had an absolute power of life and death over their children. So it suited the poet's purpose well enough, to suppose the Athenians had it before.—Or perhaps he neither thought nor knew any thing of the matter. WARBURTON.

By him imprinted, and within his power
To leave the figure, or disfigure it.
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Her. So is Lysander.

The. In himself he is :

But, in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

Her. I would, my father look'd but with my eyes.

The. Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

Her. I do entreat your grace to pardon me.

I know not by what power I am made bold ;
Nor how it may concern my modesty,
In such a presence here, to plead my thoughts :
But I beseech your grace, that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case,
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

The. Either to die the death [§], or to abjure
For ever the society of men.
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires,
Know of your youth [¶], examine well your blood,
Whether if you yield not to your father's choice,
You can endure the livery of a nun ;
For aye [‡] to be in shady cloister mew'd,
To live a barren sister all your life,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
Thrice blessed they, that master so their blood,
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage :
But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd [§],
Than that, which, withering on the virgin-thorn,

[§] — to die the death,] See p. 58, n. 6. MALONE.

[¶] Know of your youth,—] Bring your youth to the question. Consider your youth. JOHNSON.

[‡] For aye—] i. e. for ever. STEEVENS.

[§] But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd,] Thus all the copies ; yet *earthlier* is so harsh a word, and *earthlier happy* for *happier earthly*, a mode of speech so unusual that I wonder none of the editors have proposed *earlier happy*. JOHNSON.

It has since been observed, that Mr. Pope did propose *earlier*. We might read, *earthly happier*. STEEVENS.

This a thought in which Shakspeare seems to have much delighted. We meet with it again in his 5th, 6th, and 54th Sonnet, MALONE.

Grows, lives, and dies, in single blessedness.

Her. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship, to whose unwish'd yoke³
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

The. Take time to pause: and, by the next new moon,
(The sealing-day betwixt my love and me,
For everlasting bond of fellowship,)
Upon that day either prepare to die,
For disobedience to your father's will;
Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would:
Or on Diana's altar to protest,
For aye, austerity and single life.

Dem. Relent, sweet Hermia;—And, Lysander, yield
Thy crazed title to my certain right.

Lys. You have her father's love, Demetrius;
Let me have Hermia's: do you marry him⁴.

Ege. Scornful Lysander! true, he hath my love;
And what is mine, my love shall render him;
And she is mine; and all my right of her
I do estate unto Demetrius.

Lys. I am, my lord, as well deriv'd as he,
As well possess'd; my love is more than his;
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd,
If not with vantage, as Demetrius';
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
I am belov'd of beauteous Hermia:
Why should not I then prosecute my right?
Demetrius, I'll avouch it to his head,
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
Upon this spotted⁵ and inconstant man.

The. I must confess, that I have heard so much,

³ — to whose unwish'd yoke] To, which is wanting in the quarto and first folio, was added by the editor of the second folio. MALONE.

⁴ Let me have Hermia's do you marry him.] I suspect that Shakspere wrote:

“Let me have Hermia; do you marry him.” TYRWHITT.

⁵ — spotted—] As spotless is innocent, so spotted is wicked. JOHNS.

And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof;
 But, being over-full of self-affairs,
 My mind did lose it.—But, Demetrius, come;
 And come, Egeus; you shall go with me,
 I have some private schooling for you both.—
 For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
 To fit your fancies to your father's will;
 Or else the law of Athens yields you up
 (Which by no means we may extenuate)
 To death, or to a vow of single life.—
 Come, my Hippolita; What cheer, my love?—
 Demetrius, and Egeus, go along:
 I must employ you in some business
 Against our nuptial; and confer with you
 Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

Ege. With duty, and desire, we follow you.
 [Exeunt THES. HIP. EGE. DEM. and Train.]

Lys. How now, my love? Why is your cheek so pale?
 How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

Her. Belike, for want of rain; which I could well
 Beteeem them⁶ from the tempest of mine eyes.

Lys. Ah me! for aught that I could ever read,
 Could ever hear by tale or history,
 The course of true love never did run smooth?
 But, either it was different in blood;

Her. O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low!⁷

Lys. Or else misgraced, in respect of years;

Her. O spite! too old to be engag'd to young!

⁶ Beteeem them—] Give them, bestow upon them. The word is used by Spenser. JOHNSON.

I rather think that to beteeem in this place signifies (as in the northern counties) to pour out; from *tommer*, Danish. STEEVENS.

⁷ The course of true love &c.] This passage seems to have been imitated by Milton. *Paradise lost*, B. 10.—898, et seqq. MALONE.

⁸ —too high to be enthrall'd to low!] The old copies read—to love. The emendation is Mr. Theobald's. It is fully supported, not only by the tenour of the preceding lines, but by a passage in our author's *Venus and Adonis*, in which the former predicts that the course of love never shall run smooth.

“Sorrow on love hereafter shall attend,

“Ne'er settled equally, too high, or low, &c.” MALONE.

Lys.

Eys. Or else it stood upon the choice of friends :

Her. O hell ! to choose love by another's eye !

Lys. Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,

War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it ;

Making it momentany⁹ as a sound,

Swift as a shadow, short as any dream ;

Brief as the lightning in the colly'd night¹,

That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,

And ere a man hath power to say,—Behold !

The jaws of darkness do devour it up :

So quick bright things come to confusion.

Her. If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,

It stands as an edict in destiny :

Then let us teach our trial patience,

Because it is a customary cross ;

As due to love, as thoughts, and dreams, and sighs,

Wishes, and tears, poor fancy's followers².

Lys. A good persuasion ; therefore, hear me, Hermia.

I have a widow aunt, a dowager

Of great revenue, and she hath no child :

From Athens is her house remote seven leagues ;

9 *Making it momentany—*] Thus the quartos. The folio reads
—momentary. MALONE.

Momentany is the old and proper word. JOHNSON.

1 *Brief as the lightning in the colly'd night,*

That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,] Though the word *spleen* be here employed oddly enough, yet I believe it right. Shakspeare, always hurried on by the grandeur and multitude of his ideas, assumes every now and then, an uncommon licence in the use of his words. Particularly in complex moral modes it is usual with him to employ one, only to express a very few ideas of that number of which it is composed. Thus wanting here to express the ideas—of a sudden, or—in a trice, he uses the word *spleen*; which, partially considered, signifying a hasty sudden fit, is enough for him, and he never troubles himself about the further or fuller signification of the word. Here, he uses the word *spleen* for a sudden hasty fit; to just the contrary, in the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, he uses *sudden* for *splenetic*.—"sudden quips." And it must be owned this sort of conversation adds a force to the diction.

WARBURTON.

— *the colly'd night,*] *colly'd*, i. e. black, smutted with coal, a word still used in the midland counties. STEEVENS.

2 — *poor fancy's followers.*] *Fancy* here and in many other places in these plays, signifies *love*. MALONE.

And

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And she respects me as her only son.
 There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
 And to that place the sharp Athenian law
 Cannot pursue us: If thou lov'st me then,
 Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow-night:
 And in the wood, a league without the town,
 Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
 'To do observance to a morn of May,
 There will I stay for thee.

Her. My good Lyfander!
 I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow;
 By his best arrow with the golden head;
 By the simplicity of Venus' doves;
 By that which knitteth souls, and prospers loves;
 And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen,
 When the false Trojan under sail was seen;
 By all the vows that ever men have broke,
 In number more than ever women spoke;—
 In that same place thou hast appointed me,
 To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

Lyf. Keep promise, love: Look, here comes Helena.

Enter HELENA.

Her. God speed, fair Helena! Whither away?

Hel. Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.
 Demetrius loves your fair: O happy fair!
 Your eyes are lode-stars⁵ and your tongue's sweet air
 More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
 When wheat is green, when haw-thorn buds appear.

Sickness

³ — *by that fire that burn'd the Carthage queen,*] Shakspeare had forgot that Theseus performed his exploits before the Trojan war, and consequently long before the death of Dido. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *your fair:*] *Fair* is used again as a substantive in the *Comedy of Errors*:

“ ——— My decayed fair,

“ A sunny look of his would soon repair.”

See p. 148, n. 6. STEEVENS.

⁵ *Your eyes are lode-stars;* This was a complement not unfrequent among the old poets. The lode-star is the *leading* or guiding star, that is, the pole-star. The magnet is, for the same reason, called the *lode-stone*, either because it leads iron, or because it guides the sailor. Milton has the same thought in *L'Allegro*:

To go's

Sickness is catching; O, were favour so⁶!

Your words I'd catch⁷; fair Hermia, ere I go;

My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,

My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.

Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,

The rest I'll give to be to you translated⁸.

O, teach me how you look; and with what art

You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

Her. I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

Hel. O, that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

Her. I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

Hel. O, that my prayers could such affection move!

Her. The more I hate, the more he follows me.

Hel. The more I love, the more he hateth me.

Her. His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

Hel. None, but your beauty; 'Would that fault were mine!

Her. Take comfort; he no more shall see my face;

Lyfander and myself will fly this place.—

Before the time I did Lyfander see⁹,

Seem'd Athens as a paradise to me:

O then,

"Tow'rs and battlements he sees

"Bosom'd high in tufted trees,

"Where perhaps some beauty lies,

"The cynosure of neighb'ring eyes."

Davies calls Elizabeth, "lode-stone to hearts and lode-stone to all eyes." JOHNSON.

⁶ — O, were favour so!] Favour is feature, countenance. So, in *Twelfth-Night*, ACT II. sc. iv:

"———thine eye

"Hath stay'd upon some favour that it loves." STEEVENS.

⁷ Your words I'd catch—] The old copies read—I catch. The emendation was made by the editor of the second folio. Sir Thomas Hanmer reads—Yours would I catch; in which he has been followed by the subsequent editors. As the old reading (words) is intelligible, I have adhered to the ancient copies. MALONE.

⁸ — to be to you translated.] To translate, in our author, sometimes signifies to change, to transform. So, in *Timon*:

"———to present slaves and servants

"Translates his rivals." STEEVENS.

⁹ Perhaps every reader may not discover the propriety of these lines. Hermia is willing to comfort Helena, and to avoid all appearance of

O then, what graces in my love do dwell,
That he hath turn'd a heaven unto a hell!

Lys. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:
To-morrow night when Phœbe doth behold
Her silver visage in the watry glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,
(A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,
'Through Athens' gates have we devis'd to steal.

Her. And in the wood, where often you and I
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet;
There my Lysander and myself shall meet:
And thence, from Athens, turn away our eyes,
To seek new friends and stranger companies.
Farewell, sweet playfellow; pray thou for us,
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius!
Keep word, Lysander: we must starve our eyes

triumph over her. She therefore bids her not to consider the power of pleasing, as an advantage to be much envied or much desired, since Hermia, who n she considers as possessing it in the supreme degree, has found no other effect of it than the loss of happiness. JOHNSON.

1 Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet;] That is, emptying our bosoms of these secrets upon which we were wont to consult each other with so sweet satisfaction. HEATH.

The old copies read *swell'd*; and in the line next but one *strange companions*. Both emendations were made by Mr. Theobald, who supports them by observing that "this whole scene is in rhyme. *Sweet* was easily corrupted into *swell'd*, because that made an antithesis to *emptying*; and "*strange companions*" our editors thought was plain English, but "*stranger companies*" a little quaint and unintelligible." Our author very often uses the substantive, *stranger*, adjectively, and *companies*, to signify *companions*. So, in *K. Richard II.* Act 1:

"To tread the *stranger* paths of banishment."

and in *K. Henry V.*:

"His *companies* unletter'd, rude, and shallow."

The latter of Mr. Theobald's emendations is likewise supported by Stowe's *Annales*, p. 991, edit. 1615: The prince himself was faine to get upon the high altar, to girt his aforesaid *companies* with the order of knighthood." Mr. Heath observes, that our author seems to have had the following passage in the 55th Psalm, (v. 14, 15.) in his thoughts: "But it was even thou, my companion, my guide, and mine own familiar friend. We took *sweet counsel* together, and walked in the house of God as friends." MALONE.

From

MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

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From lovers' food, 'till morrow deep midnight².

[Exit HERMIA.]

Lys. I will, my Hermia.—Helena, adieu:
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you! [Exit LYS.]

Hel. How happy some, o'er other some, can be!

Through Athens I am thought as fair as she.

But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;

He will not know what all but he do know.

And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,

So I, admiring of his qualities.

Things base and vile, holding no quantity³,

Love can transpoſe to form and dignity.

Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind;

And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind;

Nor hath love's mind of any judgment taſte;

Wings, and no eyes, figure unheedy haſte:

And therefore is love ſaid to be a child,

Be cauſe in choice he is ſo oft beguil'd.

As waggiſh boys in game⁴ themſelves forſwear,

So the boy love is perjur'd every where:

For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,

He hail'd down oaths, that he was only mine;

And when this hail ſome heat from Hermia felt,

So he diſſolv'd, and ſhowers of oaths did melt.

I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight:

Then to the wood will he, to-morrow-night,

Purſue her; and for this intelligence

If I have thanks, it is a dear expence:

But herein mean I to enrich my pain,

To have his ſight thither, and back again.

[Exit.]

² — when Phæbe doth behold &c.

— deep midnight.] Shakspeare has a little forgotten himſelf. It appears from page 441, that to-morrow night would be within three nights of the new moon, when there is no moonſhine at all, much leſs at deep midnight. The ſame oversight occurs in Act. III. ſc. i.

BLACKSTONE.

³ — no quantity,] Quality ſeems a word more ſuitable to the ſenſe than quantity, but either may ſerve. JOHNSON.

⁴ — in game] Game here ſignifies not contentious play, but ſport, &c. So Spenser: "twixt carneſt and 'twixt game." JOHNSON.

⁵ — Hermia's eyne,] This plural is common both in Chaucer and Spenser. STEEVENS.

SCENE II.

*The same. A Room in a Cottage.**Enter* SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, QUINCE,
and STARVELING⁶.*Quin.* Is all our company here?*Bot.* You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip⁷.*Quin.* Here is the scroll of every man's name, which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the duke and dutchess, on his wedding-day at night.*Bot.* First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on: then read the names of the actors; and so grow to a point⁸.*Quin.* Merry, our play is—The most lamentable comedy, and most cruel death of Pyramus and Thisbe⁹.*Bot.* A very good piece of work, I assure you, and

⁶ In this scene Shakspeare takes advantage of his knowledge of the theatre, to ridicule the prejudices and competitions of the players. Bottom, who is generally acknowledged the principal actor, declares his inclination to be for a tyrant, for a part of fury, tumult and noise, such as every young man pants to perform when he first steps upon the stage. The same Bottom, who seems bred in a tiring-room, has another histrionical passion. He is for engrossing every part, and would exclude his inferiors from all possibility of distinction. He is therefore desirous to play Pyramus, Thisbe, and the Lyon, at the same time. JOHNSON.

⁷ — the scrip.] A scrip, Fr. *escript*, now written *ecrit*. STEEVENS.

⁸ — grow to a point.] So, in the *Arraignment of Paris*, 1584:

“Our reasons will be infinite, I trow,

“Unless unto some other point we grow.” STEEVENS.

⁹ *The most lamentable comedy, &c.* This is very probably a burlesque on the title-page of *Cambyfes*: “A lamentable tragedie, mixed full of pleasant mirth, containing, *The Life of Cambyses, King of Persia, &c.*” By Tho. Parnell, bl. 1. no date. On the registers of the Stationers’ Company however, appears “the booke of *Perymus and Thisbe*, 1562.” Perhaps Shakspeare copied some part of his interlude from it.

STEEVENS.

A poem entitled *Pyramus and Thisbe* by D. Gale, was published in 4to. in 1597; but this, I believe, was posterior to the *Midsommer-Night's Dream*. MALONE.

a mer-

*merry*¹.—Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll: Masters; spread yourselves.

Quin. Answer, as I call you.—Nick Bottom the weaver.

Bot. Ready: Name what part I am for, and proceed.

Quin. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

Bot. What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

Quin. A lover, that kills himself most gallantly for love.

Bot. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it: If I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest:—Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant: I could play *Ercles* rarely, or a part to tear a cat in², to make all split³.

“ The raging rocks,
“ And shivering shocks,
“ Shall break the locks
“ Of prison-gates;
“ And Phibbus’ car
“ Shall shine from far,
“ And make and mar
“ The foolish fates.”

This was lofty!—Now name the rest of the players.—This is *Ercles’* vein, a tyrant’s vein; a lover is more condoling.

¹ *A very good piece of work,—and a merry.*] This is designed as a ridicule on the titles of our ancient moralities and interludes. Thus Skelton’s *Magnificence* is called “a goodly interlude and a mery.” STEEV.

² *I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in:*] In the old comedy of the *Roaring girl*, 1611, there is a character called *Tear-cat*, who says, “I am called, by those who have seen my valour, *Tear-cat*.” In an anonymous piece called *Histrionassix*, or *The Player whipt*, 1610, in six acts, a parcel of soldiers drag a company of players on the stage, and the captain says, “Sirrah, this is you that would rend and tear a cat upon a stage, &c.” Again, in *The Isle of Gulls*, a comedy by J. Day, 1606: “I had rather hear two such jests, than a whole play of such *Tear-cat* thunder-claps.” STEEVENS.

³ —*to make all split.*] This is to be connected with the previous part of the speech; not with the subsequent rhymes. It was the description of a bully. In the second act of the *Scornful Lady*, we meet with “two roaring boys of Rome, that made all split.” FARMER.

The same expression is used by Chapman in his *Widow’s Tears*, 1612.

MALONE.

Quin. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender*.

Flu. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You must take Thisby on you.

Flu. What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

Quin. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

Flu. Nay, faith, let me not play a woman; I have a beard coming.

Quin. That's all one; you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will†.

Bot. An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too. I'll speak in a monstrous little voice;—*Thisbe, Thisbe,—Ah, Pyramus, my lover dear; thy Thisby dear! and lady dear!*

Quin. No, no; you must play Pyramus, and, Flute, you Thisby.

Bot. Well, proceed.

Quin. Robin Starveling, the tailor.

Star. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother‡.—Tom Snowt, the tinker.

Snowt.

* — the bellows-mender.] In Ben Jonson's masque of *Pan's Anniversary*, &c. a man of the same profession is introduced. I have been told that a bellows-mender was one who had the care of organs, regals, &c. STEEVENS.

† — as small as you will.] This passage shews how the want of women on the old stage was supplied. If they had not a young man who could perform the part with a face that might pass for feminine, the character was acted in a mask, which was at that time a part of a lady's dress so much in use that it did not give any unusual appearance to the scene; and he that could modulate his voice in a female tone might play the woman very successfully. It is observed in *Downe's Memoirs of the Playhouse*, that one of these counterfeit heroines moved the passions more strongly than the women that have since been brought upon the stage. Some of the catastrophes of the old comedies, which make lovers marry the wrong women, are, by recollection of the common use of masks, brought nearer to probability. JOHNSON.

Prynne, in his *Histriomastix*, exclaims with great vehemence through several pages, because a woman acted a part in a play at Blackfriars in the year 1628. STEEVENS.

‡ — you must play Thisby's mother.] There seems a double forgetfulness of our poet, in relation to the characters of this interlude. The father and mother of Thisbe, and the father of Pyramus, are here mentioned, who do not appear at all in the interlude; but Wall and Moonshine

Snug. Here, Peter Quince.

Quin. You, Pyramus's father; myself, Thisby's father;
—Snug, the joiner, you, the lion's part:—and, I hope,
here is a play fitted.

Snug. Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if
it be, give it me, for I am slow of study⁶.

Quin. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but
roaring.

Bot. Let me play the lion too: I will roar, that I will
do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I
will make the duke say, *Let him roar again, let him roar again.*

Quin. An you should do it too terribly, you would
fright the dutehess and the ladies, that they would shriek;
and that were enough to hang us all.

All. That would hang us every mother's son.

Bot. I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the
ladies out of their wits, they would have no more dis-
cretion but to hang us: but I will aggravate my voice so,
that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove; I will
roar you an 'twere any nightingale.

Quin. You can play no part but Pyramus: for Pyramus
is a sweet-faced man; a proper man, as one shall see in a
summer's-day; a most lovely, gentleman-like man;
therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

Bot. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I
best to play it in?

Quin. Why, what you will.

Bot. I will discharge it in either your straw-colour'd
beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain
beard, or your French-crown-colour beard, your perfect
yellow⁷.

Quin.
shine are both employed in it, of whom there is not the least notice taken
here. THEOBALD.

Theobald is wrong as to this last particular. The introduction of
Wall and Moonshine was an after-thought. — Act III. sc. i. It
may be observed, however, that no part of what is rehearsed is after-
wards repeated, when the piece is acted before Theseus. STEEVENS.

⁶ — *slow of study.*] *Study* is still the cant term used in a theatre for
getting any nonsense by rote. Hamlet asks the player if he can "*study*"
a speech. STEEVENS.

⁷ — *your perfect yellow.*] Here Bottom again discovers a true ge-
nius

Quin. Some of your French crowns² have no hair at all, and then you will play barefaced.—But, masters, here are your parts: and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moon-light; there will we rehearse: for if we meet in the city, we shall be dog'd with company, and our devices known. In the mean time,³ I will draw a bill of properties⁴, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.

Bot. We will meet; and there we may rehearse more obscenely, and courageously. Take pains; be perfect; adieu.

Quin. At the duke's oak we meet.

Bot. Enough; Hold, or cut bow-strings⁵. [*Exeunt.*]

nus for the stage by his solicitude for propriety of effects, and his deliberation which beard to chuse among many beards, and unnatural.

JOHNSON.

It was the custom formerly to wear coloured beards. So in the old comedy of *Robin-Alley*, 1611:

“What colour'd beard comes next by the window?”

“A black man's, I think;

“I think, a red: for that is most in fashion.” STEEVENS.

² — *French crowns* &c.] That is, a head from which the hair has fallen in one of the last stages of the *lues venerea*, called the *corona veneris*. To this our poet has frequent allusions. STEEVENS.

³ — *properties*,] *Properties* are whatever little articles are wanted in a play for the actors, according to their respective parts, dresses and scenes excepted. The person who delivers them out is to this day called the *property-man*. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *Hold, or cut bow-strings*.] To meet, whether bow-strings hold or are cut, is to meet in all events. To cut the bowstring, when bows were in use, was probably a common practice of those who bore enmity to the archer. “He hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bowstring,” (says Don Pedro in *Much ado about nothing*,) and the little hangman dare not shoot at him.” MALONE.

Hold, or cut cod-piece point, is a proverb to be found in Ray's Collection, p. 57. edit 1727. COLLINS.

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

*A Wood near Athens.**Enter a Fairy at one door, and PUCK at another.**Puck.* How now spirit! whither wander you?*Fai.* Over hill, over dale²,

Thorough bush, thorough briar,

Over park, over pale,

Thorough flood, thorough fire,

I do wander every where,

Swifter than the moon's sphere³;

And I serve the fairy queen,

To dew her orbs⁴ upon the green:The cowslips tall her pensioners be⁵;

In

² *Over hill, over dale, &c.]* So Drayton in his *Court of Fairy*:

"Thorough brake, thorough brier,

"Thorough muck, thorough mire,

"Thorough water, thorough fire." JOHNSON.

³ — *the moon's sphere;*] Unless we suppose this to be the Saxon genitive case, (as it is here printed,) the metre will be defective. So, in a letter from Gabriel Harvey to Spenser, 1580: "Have we not God bys wrath, for Goddess wrath, and a thousand of the same flampe, wherein the corrupte orthography in the molte, *hath* her the sole or principal cause of corrupt profodye in over-many?" STEEVENS.⁴ *To dew her orbs upon the green:]* The orbs here mentioned are the circles supposed to be made by the fairies on the ground, whose verdure proceeds from the fairy's care to water them. Thus Drayton:

"They in their courses make that round,

"In meadows and in marshes found,

"Of them so called the fairy ground." JOHNSON.

Thus in *Olaus Magnus de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*: "—similes illis spectris, quæ in multis locis, præsertim nocturno tempore, suum saltatorium orbem cum omnium mularum concentu versare solent." It appears from the same author, that these dancers always parched up the grass, and therefore it is properly made the office of Puck to refresh it.

STEEVENS.

⁵ *The cowslips tall her pensioners be:]* i. e. her guards. The golden-coated cowslips were chosen by the author as *pensioners* to the Fairy Queen, the dress of the Band of Gentlemen Pensioners being in the time of Queen Elizabeth very splendid, and (as we learn from Osborne) the tallest and handsomest men being generally chosen by her for that office.

In their gold coats spots you see⁶;

Those be rubies, fairy favours,

In those freckles live their favours:

I must go seek some dew-drops here,

And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear⁷.

Farewel, thou lob of spirits⁸, I'll be gone;

Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

Puck. The king doth keep his revels here to night;

Take heed, the queen come not within his sight.

For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,

Because that she, as her attendant, hath

A lovely boy, stol'n from an Indian king;

She never had so sweet a changeling⁹;

And jealous Oberon would have the child

Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild

But she, perforce, withholds the loved boy,

Crowns him with flowers, and makes him call her joy:

And now they never meet in grove, or green,

By fountain clear, or spangled star-light sheen¹,

office. See Vol. I. p. 234, n. 5. The allusion was pointed out by Mr. Steevens. MALONE.

The cowslip was a favourite among the fairies. JOHNSON.

⁶ *In their gold coats spots you see;*] Shakspeare, in *Cymbeline*, refers to the same red spots:

"A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops

"In the bottom of a cowslip." PERCY.

⁷ *And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.*] The same thought occurs in an old comedy call'd the *Wisdom of Doctor Dodypoll*, 1600. An enchanter says:

"Twas I that led you through the painted meads

"Where the light fairies danc'd upon the flowers,

"Hanging on every leaf an orient pearl." STEEVENS.

⁸ — *lob of spirits,*] *Lob*, *lubber*, *looby*, *lobcock*, all denote both inactivity of body and dullness of mind. JOHNSON.

So, in the *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, by B. and Fletcher: "There is a pretty tale of a witch that had the devil's mark about her, that had a giant to her son, that was called *Lob-lye-by-the-fire*." This being seems to be of kindred the *lubber-fiend* of Milton, as Mr. Warton has remarked in his *Observations on the Faery Queen*. STEEVENS.

⁹ — *changeling:*] *Changeling* is commonly used for the child supposed to be left by the fairies, but here for the child taken away.

JOHNSON.

¹ — *sheen,*] Shining, bright, gay. JOHNSON.

But

But they do square²; that all their elves, for fear,
Creep into acorn cups, and hide them there.

Fai. Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite,
Call'd Robin Good-fellow³: are you not he,
That fright⁴ the maidens of the villagery;
Skim milk; and sometimes labour in the quern⁵,
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;

And

² But they do square;] To square here is to quarrel. The French word *contrescarier* has the same import. JOHNSON.

So, in *Jack Drums Entertainment*, 1601:

"— pray let me go, for he'll begin to square." STEEVENS.

It is somewhat whimsical, that the glaziers use the words *square* and *quarrel* as synonymous terms, for a pane of glass. BLACKSTONE.

³ — Robin Goodfellow;] This account of Robin Good-fellow corresponds, in every article, with that given of him in *Haguenet's Declaration*, cii. xx. p. 34: "And if that the bowle of curd and creame were not duly set out for Robin Good-fellow, the frier, and Silie the dairy-maid, why then either the pottage was burnt to next day in the pot, or the cheefes would not curdle, or the butter would not come, or the ale in the fat never would have good head. But if a Peter-penny or an house-egge were behind, or a patch of tythe unpaid, —then ware —of bull-beggars, spirits, &c." He is mentioned by Cartwright [*Ordinary*, Act iii. sc. i.] as a spirit particularly fond of disconcerting and disturbing domestic peace and economy. T. WARTON.

Reginald Scot gives the same account of this frolicksome spirit, in his *Discovery of Witchcraft*, Lond. 1588. 4to. p. 66. "Your grandames maids, were wont to set a bowl of milk for him, for his pains in grinding of malt and mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight—this white bread and bread and milk, was his standing fee." STEEVENS.

⁴ That fright—] The old copies read *frights*; and in grammatical propriety, I believe, this verb, as well as those that follow, should agree with the personal pronoun *he*, rather than with *you*. If so, our author ought to have written—*frights, skips, labours, makes, and misleads*. The other, however, being the more common usage, and that which he has preferred, I have corrected the former word. MALONE.

⁵ Skim milk; and sometimes labour in the quern,

And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;] The sense of these lines is confused. Are not you he, says the fairy, that fright the country girls, that skim milk, work in the hand-mill, and make the tired dairy-woman churn without effect? The mention of the mill seems out of place, for he is not now telling the good but the evil that he does. JOHNS.

Perhaps the construction is—and sometimes make the breathless housewife labour in the quern, and bootless churn. This would obviate the objection made by Dr. Johnson, viz. that "the mention of the

the

And sometime make the drink to bear no barm⁶;
 Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
 Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck⁷,
 You do their work, and they shall have good luck:
 Are not you he?

Puck. Thou speak'st aright⁸;
 I am that merry wanderer of the night.

the mill is out of place, for she is not now telling the good but the evil that he does." MALONE.

A *Quern* is a hand-mill, *kuerna*, *mola*. Islandic. STEEVENS...

⁶ — *no barm*;] *Barme* is a name for yeast, yet used in our midland counties, and universally in Ireland. STEEVENS.

⁷ Those that Hobgoblin call you, and sweet Puck, &c.] To those traditional opinions Milton has reference in *L'Allegro*. A like account of Puck is given by Drayton, in his *Nymphidia*.—Whether Drayton or Shakspeare wrote first, I cannot discover. JOHNSON.

The editor of the *Canterbury Tales of Chaucer*, in 4 vols. 8vo. 1775, has incontrovertibly proved Drayton to have been a follower of Shakspeare; for, says he, "*Don Quixot* (which was not published till 1605.) is cited in the *Nymphidia*, whereas we have an edition of the *Midsommer-Night's Dream* in 1600." STEEVENS.

Don Quixote, though published in Spain in 1605, was probably little known in England till Skelton's translation appeared in 1612. Drayton's poem was, I have no doubt, subsequent to that year. The earliest edition of it that I have seen, was printed in 1619. MALONE.

—sweet Puck,] The epithet is by no means superfluous; as Puck alone was far from being an endearing appellation. It signified nothing better than fiend or devil. So, the author of *Pierce Ploughman* puts the *powk for the devil*. fol. lxxxx. b. v. penult. See also fol. lxvii. v. 15. "*none belle powke*."

It seems to have been an old Gothic word. *Puke*, *pukē*; Sathanas. *Gudm. And. Lexicon. Island.* TYRWHITT.

So, in Spenser's *Epithalamion*, 1595:

"Ne let house-fyres, nor lightning's helpelesse harms,

"Ne let the *powke*, nor other evil spright,

"Ne let mischievous witches with their charmes

"Ne let hobgoblins &c." STEEVENS.

⁸ *Puck.* Thou speak'st aright.] I would fill up the verse which I suppose the author left complete: *Thou*, thou speak'st aright.

It seems that in the *Ætæol* mythology Puck, or Hobgoblin, was the trusty servant of Oberon, and always employed to watch or detect the intrigues of Queen Mab, called by Shakspeare Titania. For in Drayton's *Nymphidia*, the same fairies are engaged in the same business. Mab has an amour with Pigwiggen; Oberon being jealous, sends Hobgoblin to catch them, and one of Mab's nymphs opposes him by a spell.

JOHNSON.

In

I jest to Oberon, and make him smile,
 When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
 Neighing in likeness of a filly foal:
 And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
 In very likeness of a roasted crab;⁹
 And, when she drinks, against her lips I bob,
 And on her wither'd dew-lap pour the ale.
 The wisest aunt¹, telling the saddest tale,
 Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
 Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
 And tailor cries², and falls into a cough;
 And then the whole quire hold their hips, and loose³;
 And waxen⁴ in their mirth, and neeze, and swear
 A merrier hour was never wasted there.—
 But room, Faery⁵, here comes Oberon.

Fai. And here my mistress:—'Would that he were gone.

*Enter OBERON*⁶, *at one door, with his train, and TITANIA*⁷, *at another, with hers.*

Obe. Ill met by moon-light, proud Titania.

Tita.

⁹ — a roasted crab;] i. e. a crab apple. So again in *Love's Labour's Lost*:

"When roasted crabs kiss in the bowl. MALONE.

¹ *The wisest aunt,*] Though *aunt* in many ancient English books means a *procure*, I believe it here only signifies an old woman in general. MALONE.

² *And tailor cries,*] The custom of crying *taylor* at a sudden fall backwards, I think I remember to have observed. He that slips beside his chair falls as a tailor squats upon his board. The Oxford editor, and Dr. Warburton after him, read *and rails or cries*, plausibly, but I believe not rightly. Besides, the trick of the fairy is represented as producing rather merriment than anger. JOHNSON.

³ — *hold their hips, and loose;*]

"And laughter holding both his sides." Milton. STEEVENS.

⁴ *And waxen*] And *increase*, as the *moon waxes*. JOHNSON.

⁵ *But room, Faery.*] The word *Faery*, was sometimes of three syllables, as often in Spenser. JOHNSON.

⁶ *Enter Oberon,*] The judicious editor of the *Canterbury Tales* of Chaucer, in his *Introductory discourse*, (See vol. iv. p. 161.) observes, that "*Puck* and *Proserpina* in the *Merchant's Tale*, appear to have been the true progenitors of Shakspeare's *Oberon* and *Titania*." STEEVENS.

⁷ *Titania.*] As to the *Fairy Queen*, (says Mr. Warton in his *Observations on Spenser*,) considered apart from the race of fairies, the notion of such

Tita. What, jealous Oberon? Fairy, skip hence;
I have forsworn his bed and company.

Obe. Tarry, rash wanton; Am not I thy lord?

Tita. Then I must be thy lady: But I know
When thou hast stol'n away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin fate all day,
Playing on pipes of corn, and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steep of India?
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your busin'd mistress, and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded; and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity.

Ob. How canst thou thus, for shame, Titania,
Glaunce at my credit with Hippolita,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?
And make him with fair Egle break his faith,
With Ariadne, and Antiopa?

Tita. These are the forgeries of jealousy:
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,

Or

such an imaginary personage was very common. Chaucer, in his *Rime of Sir Thopas*, mentions her, together with a Fairy land. STEEVENS..

⁸ — *through the glimmering night*] The *glimmering night* is the night faintly illuminated by stars. In *Macbeth* our author says,

“The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day.” STEEV.

⁹ *From Perigenia, whom he ravished &c.*] In North's translation of Plutarch (*Life of Theseus*) this lady is called *Perigouna*. The alteration was probably intentional, for the sake of harmony. Her real name was *Perigune*. MALONE.

¹ *And never, since the middle summer's spring, &c.*] By the *middle summer's spring*, our author means to mean the *beginning of middle or mid summer*. *Spring* he uses again; *Henry IV.* P. II.

“*As flows congel'd in the spring of day.*” STEEVENS.

So Holinshed, p. 494. — “the morowe after about the *spring* of the daie” — MALONE.

² — *paved fountain*;] A fountain laid round the edge with stone. JOHNS. Perhaps paved at the bottom. So, Lord Bacon in his *Essay on Gardens*: “As for the other kind of *fountains*, which we may call a bath-

ing

Or on the beached margent³ of the sea,
 To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
 But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
 Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain⁴,
 As in revenge have suck'd up from the sea
 Contagious fogs; which falling in the land,
 Have every pelting river⁵ made so proud,
 That they have overborne their continents⁶:
 The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
 The ploughman lost his sweat; and the green corn
 Hath rotted, ere his youth attain'd a beard⁷:
 The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
 And crows are fatted with the murrain flock⁸;
 The nine-men's morris is fill'd up with mud⁹;

And

ing-pool, it may admit much curiosity and beauty. *As that the bottom be finely pebbled*. . . the *sides* likewise, &c." STEEVENS.

³ Or on the beached margent—] The old copies read—Or in. Corrected by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

⁴ — the winds, piping] So, Milton:

"While rocking winds are piping loud." JOHNSON.

⁵ — pelting river] Thus the quartos: the folio reads *petty*. Shakspeare has in *Lear* the same word,—*low pelting farms*. The meaning is plainly, *despicable, mean, sorry, wretched*; but as it is a word without any reasonable etymology, I should be glad to dismiss it for *petty*: yet it is undoubtedly right. We have "*petty pelting officer* in *Measure for Measure*." JOHNSON.

This word is always used as a term of contempt. STEEVENS.

⁶ — overborne their continents:] Born down the banks that contained them. So, in *Lear*:

"—— close pent-up guilts,

"Rive your concealing continents!" JOHNSON.

⁷ — and the green corn

Hath rotted, ere his youth attain'd a beard:] So, in our author's *Eighth Sonnet*:

"And summer's green all girded up in *sheaves*,

"Borne on the bier with white, and bristly beard." MALONE.

⁸ — murrain flock:] The *murrain* is the plague in cattle. It is here used by Shakspeare as an adjective, and substantive by others.

STEEVENS.

⁹ The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud:] In that part of Warwickshire where Shakspeare was educated, and the neighbouring parts of Northamptonshire, the shepherds and other boys dig up the turf with their knives to represent a sort of imperfect chess-board. It consists of a square, sometimes only a foot diameter, sometimes three or four yards.

And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,
For lack of tread, are undistinguishable :
The human mortals¹ want their winter here² ;

yards. Within this is another square, every side of which is parallel to the external square, and these squares are joined by lines drawn from each corner of both squares, and the middle of each line. One party, or player, has wooden pegs, the other stones, which they move in such a manner as to take up each other's men as they are called, and the area of the inner square is called the Pound, in which the men taken up are impounded. These figures are by the country people called *Nine Men's Morris*, or *Merrils*, and are so called, because each party has nine men. * These figures are always cut upon the green turf or leys, as they are called, or upon the grass at the end of ploughed lands, and in rainy seasons never fail to be *choaked up with mud*. JAMES.

Nine men's morris is a game still play'd by the shepherds, cow-keepers, &c. in the midland counties, as follows :

A figure is made on the ground, by cutting out the turf; and two persons take each nine stones, which they place by turns in the angles, and afterwards move alternately, as at chess or draughts. He who can place three in a straight line, may then take off any one of his adversary's, where he pleases, till one, having lost all his men, loses the game.

ALCHORNE.

In Cotgrave's *Dictionary*, under the article *Merelles*, is the following explanation. "Le Jeu des Merelles. The boyish game called Merils, or fivepenny morris; played here most commonly with stones, but in France with pawns, or men made on purpose, and termed *merelles*."

TOLLET.

The foregoing explanation is probably the true one. Some, however, have thought that "the nine men's morris" here means the ground marked out for a morris dance performed by nine persons. MALONE.

¹ *The human mortals*.] Shakspeare might have employ'd this epithet, which, at first sight, appears redundant, to mark the difference between men and fairies. Fairies were not human, but they were yet subject to mortality. STEEVENS.

See the *Fairy Queen*, B. II. c. 10; and Warton's *OBSERVATIONS* on Spenser, vol. i. p. 55. REED.

² — *their winter here*;] Here, in this country.—I once inclined to receive the emendation proposed by Mr. Theobald, and adopted by Sir T. Hanmer,—*their winter cheer*; but perhaps alteration is unnecessary. "Their winter" may mean, these sports with which country people are wont to beguile a winter evening, at the season of Christmas, which, it appears from the next line was particularly in our author's contemplation :

"The wery winter nights restore the Christmas game."

"And now the seson doth invite to banquet townish games."

Romans and Juliet, 1562. MALONE.

No

No night is now with hymn or carol blest³ :—
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods⁴,

Pale

³ *No night is now with hymn or carol blest :*] Since the coming of Christianity, this season, [winter,] in commemoration of the birth of Christ, has been particularly devoted to festivity. And to this custom, notwithstanding the impropriety, *hymn or carol blest* certainly alludes.

WARBURTON.

⁴ *Therefore the moon, the governess of floods, &c.*] This line has no immediate connection with that preceding it (as Dr. Johnson seems to have thought). It does not refer to the omission of hymns or carols, but of the fairy rites, which were disturbed in consequence of Oberon's quarrel with Titania. The moon is with peculiar propriety represented as incensed at the cessation—not of the christian carols, (as Dr. Warburton thinks,) nor of the heathen rites of adoration, (as Dr. Johnson supposes,) but of those sports, which have been always reputed to be celebrated by her light.

As the whole passage has been much misunderstood, it may be proper to observe that Titania begins with saying,

And never, since the middle summer's spring,

Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,—

But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.

She then particularly enumerates the several consequences that have flowed from their contention. The whole is divided into four clauses :

1. *Therefore the winds, &c.*

That they have overborne their continents :

2. The Ox hath *therefore* stretch'd his yoke in vain ;

The ploughman lost his sweat ;—

No night is now with hymn or carol blest :

3. *Therefore the Moon*—washes all the air,

That rheumatick diseases do abound :

4. And, *thorough* this distemperature, we see,

The seasons alter ;—

— and the mazed world,

By their increase, now knows not which is which :

And this same progeny of evils comes

From our debate, from our dissention.

In all this there is no difficulty. All these calamities are the consequences of the dissention between Oberon and Titania ; as seems to be sufficiently pointed out by the word *therefore* so often repeated. Those lines which have it not, are evidently put in apposition with the preceding line in which that word is found. MASON.

The repeated adverb *therefore*, throughout this speech, I suppose to have constant reference to the first time when it is used — All these irregularities of season happened in consequence of the disagreement between the king and queen of the fairies, and not in consequence of each other. — Ideas crowded fast on Shakspeare, and as he committed them to pa-

Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatick diseases do abound;
And, thorough this distemperature⁵, we see
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose⁶;
And on old Hyems' chin⁷, and icy crown,

per, he did not attend to the distance of the leading object from which they took their rise.

That the festivity and hospitality attending Christmas, decreased, was the subject of complaint to many of our ludicrous writers. Among the rest, to Nash, whose comedy called *Summers Last Will and Testament*, made its first appearance in the same year with this play, viz. 1600. The confusion of seasons here described, is no more than a poetical account of the weather, which happened in England about the time when this play was first published. For this information I am indebted to chance, which furnished me with a few leaves of an old meteorological history. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *this distemperature,*] By *distemperature*, I imagine is meant in this place, the perturbed state in which the king and queen had lived for some time past. Mr. Steevens thinks it means "the perturbation of the elements." MALONE.

⁶ — *hoary-headed frosts*

Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose;] Shakspeare, in *Coriolanus*, talks of the "consecrated snow that lies on Dian's lap:" and Spenser in his *Faery Queen*, B. ii. c. 2. has—

"And fills with flow'rs fair Elora's painted lap." STEEVENS.

This thought is elegantly expressed by Goldsmith in his *Traveller*:

"And winter lingering chills the lap of May." MASON.

⁷ — *Hyems' chin,*] Dr. Grey, not inelegantly conjectures, that the poet wrote, "—on old Hyems' *chill* and icy crown." It is not indeed easy to discover how a chaplet can be placed on *the chin*. STEEV.

It should be rather for *thin*, i. e. thin-hair'd. TYRWHITT.

So Cordelia speaking of Lear:

"—to watch, poor perdu!

"With this *thin* helm." STEEVENS.

Thinne is nearer to *chinne* (the spelling of the old copies) than *chill*, and therefore, I think, more likely to have been the author's word.

MALONE.

I believe this peculiar image of Hyems' chin must have come from Virgil, (*Æneid* iv. 253) through the medium of the translation of the day:

—tum fluhiua mento

Precipitant ienis, et glacie riget horrida barba." S. W.

Thus translated by Phaer, 1561:

"—and from his hoary beard adowne,

"The streames of waters fall; with yce and frost his face doth frowne."

MALONE.

Is,

An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set: The spring, the summer,
The chiding autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries, and the 'mazed world,
By their increase⁸, now knows not which is which:
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissention;
We are their parents and original.

Obe. Do you amend it, then; it lies in you:
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,
To be my henchman⁹.

Tita. Set your heart at rest,
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votaress of my order:
And, in the spice¹⁰ Indian air, by night,
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side;
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking the embarked traders on the flood;
When we have laugh'd to see the sails conceive,
And grow big-bellied, with the wanton wind:
Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait,
(Following her womb then rich with my young 'squire,)

⁸ *The chiding autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries, and the 'mazed world
By their increase, &c.]* The chiding autumn is the pregnant au-
tumn, *frugifer autumnus*. STEEVENS.

By their increase, is, by their produce. JOHNSON.
So, in our author's 97th Sonnet:

"The teeming autumn, big with rich increase,

"Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime."

The latter expression is scriptural: "Then shall the earth bring forth
her increase, and God, even our God, shall give us his blessing." PSALM
lxvii. MALONE.

⁹ — *henchman.*] Page of honour. *Cony.*

Henchman. Quasi haunch-man. One that goes behind another.
Pedisequus. BLACKSTONE.

The learned commentator might have given his etymology some sup-
port from the following passage in *K. Henry IV.* P. II.

"O Westmoreland, thou art a summer bird,

"Which ever in the haunch of winter sings

"The lifting up of day." STEEVENS.

H h 2

Would

Would imitate²; and sail upon the land,
To fetch me trifles, and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandize.
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And, for her sake, do I rear up her boy:
And, for her sake, I will not part with him.

Obe. How long within this wood intend you stay?

Tita. Perchance, till after Theseus' wedding-day.
If you will patiently dance in our round,
And see ~~our~~ moon-light revels, go with us;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

Obe. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

Tita. Not for thy fairy kingdom.—Fairies, away!
We shall chide down-right, if I longer stay.

[*Exeunt TITANIA, and her Train.*]

Obe. Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this grove,
Till I torment thee for this injury.—
My gentle Puck, come hither: Thou remember'st
Since once I sat upon a promontory
And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back³,

Uttering

² Which she, with pretty and with swimming gait,
Following, (her womb then rich with my young squire,)
Would imitate; ———] Perhaps the parenthesis should begin
sooner; as I think Mr. Kenrick observes:

(Following her womb, then rich with my young squire,)
So, in Trulla's combat with Hudibras:

" ——— She press'd so home,

" That he retired, and follow'd his bum."

And Dryden says of his *Spanish Friar*, "his great belly walks in state
before him, and his gouty legs come limping after it." FARMER.

I have followed this regulation, (which was likewise adopted by Mr.
Steevens,) though I do not think that of the old copy at all liable to
the objection made to it by *Warburton*. "She did not, (he says)
follow the ship whose motion she imitated; for that sailed on the water,
she on land." But might she not on land move in the same direction
with the ship at sea, which certainly would outstrip her? and what
is this but following?

Which, according to the present regulation, must mean—*which motion*
of the ship with swelling sails, &c: according to the old regulation
it must refer to "embarked traders." MALONE.

³ And heard a mermaid, on a dolphin's back, &c.] By the mermaid in
this passage, says Dr. Warburton, the poet meant Mary Queen of Scots;
by the dolphin, her husband, the Dauphin of France (formerly spelt
Dolphin).

Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,
That the rude sea grew civil at her song;
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres⁴,
To hear the sea-maid's musick.

Puck. I remember.

Ob. That very time I saw, (but thou could'st not,)
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd⁵: a certain aim he took
At a fair vestal, throned by the west⁶;
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts;
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon;
And the imperial vot'ers pass'd on,

Dolphin). Mary is call'd a mermaid, to denote 1. her reign over a kingdom situated in the sea; 2. her beauty and intemperate lust. *Such dulcet and harmonious breath* alludes to her genius and learning, more particularly to her sweet and graceful elocution. *The rude sea* alludes to Scotland, which in her absence rose up in arms against the Regent, and the disorders which she on her return home found means to quell. The earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, who fell in her quarrel, and the Duke of Norfolk, whose projected marriage with her was attended with such fatal consequences, are imagined by the stars that shot madly from their spheres. In the latter part of the imagery there is a peculiar justness, the vulgar opinion being that the mermaid allured men to destruction by her songs.

The learned commentator's note is here considerably abridged, but I have endeavoured to preserve the substance of it. MALONE.

⁴ And certain stars shot madly from their spheres,] So, in our author's *Rape of Lucrece*:

"And little stars shot from their fixed places." MALONE.

⁵ Cupid all arm'd:] *All arm'd*, does not signify dressed in panoply, but only enforces the word *armed*, as we might say *all booted*. JOHNSON.

So, in *Greene's Never too late*; 1616:

"Or where proud Cupid sat, all arm'd with fire."

So in Lord Surrey's translation of the fourth book of the *Æneid*:

"All utterly I could not seem forsaken." STEEVENS.

⁶ At a fair vestal, throned by the west,] A compliment to queen Elizabeth. POPE.

It was no uncommon thing to introduce a compliment to queen Elizabeth in the body of a play. So, again in *Tancred and Gismunda*, 1592:

"There lives a virgin, one without compare,

"Who of all graces hath her heavenly share;

"In whose renowne, and for whose happie days,

"Let us record this Pæan of her praise." Cantant. STEEV.

In maiden meditation, fancy-free.

Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell:

It fell upon a little western flower,—

Before, milk-white; now purple with love's wound—;

And maidens call it, love-in-idleness⁷.

Fetch me that flower; the herb I shew'd thee once;

The juice of it, on sleeping eye-lids laid,

Will make or man or woman madly dote

Upon the next live creature that it sees.

Fetch me this herb; and be thou there again,

Ere the loxjathan can swim a league.

Puck. I'll put a girdle round about the earth⁸
In forty minutes.

[*Exit.*

Ob. Having once this juice,

I'll watch Titania when she is asleep,

And drop the liquor of it in her eyes;

The next thing then the waking looks upon,

(Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,

On meddling monkey, or on busy ape)

She shall pursue it with the soul of love.

And ere I take this charm off from her sight,

(As I can take it with another herb,)

I'll make her render up her page to me.

But who comes here? I am invisible⁹;

And I will over-hear their conference.

⁷ *And maidens call it love-in-idleness.*] It is scarce necessary to mention that *love in idleness* is a flower. STEEVENS.

The flower or violet commonly called pansies, or heart's-ease, is named *love in idleness* in Warwickshire, and in Lyte's Herbal. There is a reason why Shakespeare says it is "now purple with love's wound," because one or two of its petals are of a purple colour. TOLLET.

It is called in other countries, the *Three-colour'd violet*, the *Herb of Trinity*, *Three faces in a hood*, *Girdle me to you*, &c. STEEVENS.

⁸ *I'll put a girdle round about the earth*] This expression (as Mr. Steevens has shewn) occurs in many of our old plays. MALONE.

⁹ — *I am invisible*;) I thought proper here to observe, that, as Oberon and Puck his attendant may be frequently observed to speak, when there is no mention of their entering, they are designed by the poet to be supposed on the stage during the greatest part of the remainder of the play; and to mix, as they please, as spirits, with the other actors; and embroil the plot, by their interposition, without being seen, or heard, but when to their own purpose. THEOBALD.

Enter

Enter DEMETRIUS, HELENA following him.

Dem. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander, and fair Hermia?
The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me¹.
Thou told'st me, they were stol'n into this wood;
And here am I, and wood within this wood²,
Because I cannot meet with Hermia.

Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

Hel. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;
But yet you draw not iron³, for my heart
Is true as steel: Leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

Dem. Do you entice you? Do I speak you fair?
Or rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you—I do not, nor I cannot love you?

Hel. And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me, I will fawn on you:
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love,
(And yet a place of high respect with me,)
Than to be used as you use your dog?

Dem. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit;
For I am sick, when I do look on thee.

Hel. And I am sick, when I look not on you.

¹ *The one I'll slay, the other slayeth me.*] The old copies read—*slay* and *slayeth*. Corrected by Dr. Thirby. MALONE.

² — *and wood within this wood.*] *Wood*, or *mad*, wild, raving. POPP.
In the third part of the Countess of Pembroke's *Ivy Church*, 1591, is the same quibble on the word:

“Daphne goes to the woods, and vows herself to Diana;

“Phæbus grows stark *wood* for love and fancie to Daphne.” STEEV.

³ *You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant;*

But yet you draw not iron.] I learn from Edward Fenton's *Certaine Secrete Wonders of Nature*, bl. l. 1569, that “— there is now a dayes a kind of adamant, which draweth unto it *steele*, and the same so strongly, that it hath power to knit and tie together two mouths of contrary persons, and drawe the heart of a man out of his bodie without offending any parte of him.” STEEVENS.

Dem. You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city, and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not;
To trust the opportunity of night,
And the ill counsel of a desert place,
With the rich worth of your virginity.

Hel. Your virtue is my privilege for that.
It is not night, when I do see your face,
Therefore I think I am not in the night;
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company;
For you, in any respect, are all the world:
Then how can it be said, I am alone?
When all the world is here to look on me?

Dem. I'll run from thee, and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will, the story shall be chang'd:
Apollo flies, and Daphne holds the chase.
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tyger. Bootless speed!
When cowardice pursues, and valour flies.

Dem. I will not stay thy questions; let me go:
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

Hel. Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex:

* — for that.] i. e. for leaving the city, &c. TYRWHITT.

⁵ It is not night, when I do see your face, &c.] This passage is paraphrased from two lines of an ancient poet [Tibullus]:

" — Tu nocte vel astra

" Lumen, et in solis tu mihi turba locis." JOHNSON.

⁶ Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company, &c.] The same thought occurs in *K. Henry VI.* P. II.

" A wilderness is populous enough,

" So Suffolk had thy heavenly company." MALONE.

⁷ The wildest hath not such a heart as you.]

Mitius inveni quam te genus omne ferarum. *Ovid.*

See *Timon of Athens*, Act IV. sc. i.

" — where he shall find

" The unkindest beasts more kinder than mankind." S. W.

We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
 We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.
 I'll follow thee, and make a heaven of hell,
 To die upon the hand I love so well. [*Exeunt DEM. and HEL.*]

Ob. Fare thee well, nymph: ere he do leave this grove,
 Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love.—

Re-enter Puck.

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.

Puck. Ay, there it is!

Ob. I pray thee, give it me.

I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
 Where ox-lips⁸ and the nodding violet grows;
 Quite over-canopy'd with luscious woodbine⁹,
 With sweet musk-roses, and with eglantine:
 There sleeps Titania, some time of the night,
 Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;
 And there the snake throws her enamel'd skin,
 Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in:
 And with the juice of this I'll streak her eyes,
 And make her full of hateful fantasies.
 Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove:
 A sweet Athenian lady is in love
 With a disdainful youth: anoint his eyes;
 But do it, when the next thing he espies
 May be the lady: Thou shalt know the man
 By the Athenian garments he hath on.
 Effect it with some care; that he may prove
 More fond on her, than she upon her love:
 And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

Puck. Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

[*Exeunt.*]

* —*where*—] is here used as dissyllable. The modern editors unnecessarily read—*whereon*. MALONE.

⁸ *Where oxlips*] The *oxlip* is the greater *cowslip*. STEEVENS.

⁹ *Quite over-canopy'd with luscious woodbine,*] On the margin of one of my folios an unknown hand has written—*lush* woodbine, which, I think is right.

¹⁰ *a hand I have since discovered to be Theobald's.* JOHNSON.

Shakspeare uses the word *lush* in *The Tempest*, Act II:

"How *lush* and lussy the grass looks? how green?" STEEVENS.

S C E N E

S C E N E III.

*Another part of the wood.**Enter TITANIA with her train.*

Tita. Come, now a roundel, and a fairy song²;
 Then for the third part of a minute, hence³:
 Some, to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds;
 Some, war with rear-mice⁴ for their leathern wings,
 To make my small elves coats; and some, keep back
 The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots and wonders
 At our quaint spirits⁴: Sing me now to sleep;
 Then to your offices, and let me rest.

¹ — *a roundel*,] A roundel; that is, as I suppose, a circular dance. Ben Jonson seems to call the rings which such dances are supposed to make in the grass, *roundels*. Vol. V. *Tale of a Tub*, p. 23:

"I'll have no *roundels*, I, in the queen's paths." TYRWHITT.
Rounds or *roundels* were like the present country dances. See *Orchestra*, by Sir John Davies, 1622. *Read*.

² *Then for the third part of a minute, hence*,] Dr. Warburton reads—*for the third part of the midnight*—.

The persons employed are *fairies*, to whom the third part of a minute might not be a very short time to do such work in. The owl might as well have objected to the epithet *tall*, which the fairy bestows on the *cowslip*. But Shakspeare, throughout the play, has preserved the proportion of other things in respect of these tiny beings, compared with whose size, a cowslip might be tall, and to whose powers of execution, a minute might be equivalent to an age. STEEVENS.

³ — *with rear-mice*] A *rear mouse* is a bat; a mouse that rears from the ground by the aid of wings. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *quaint spirits*] For this Dr. Warburton reads against all authority—*quaint sports*. But Prospero in *The Tempest*, applies *quaint* to Ariel. JOHNSON.

Dr. Johnson is right in the word, and Dr. Warburton in the interpretation. A *spirit* was sometimes used for a *sport*. In Decker's play, *If it be not good, the devil is in it*, the king of Naples says to the devil Ruffian, disguised in the character of Shalcan: "Now Shalcan, some new spirit? Ruff. A thousand wenches stark-naked to play at leap-frog. Omnes. O rare fight!" FARMER.

S O N G.

S O N G.

1. Fai. *You spotted snakes, with double tongue,
Thorn hedge-hogs, be not seen;
Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong;
Come not near our fairy queen:*

Chorus.

*Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla, lulla, lullaby:
Never harm, nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So, good night, with lullaby.*

II.

2. Fai. *Weaving spiders, come not here;
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence:
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm, nor snail, do no offence.*

Chorus.

Philomel, with melody, &c.

1. Fa. *Hence, away; now all is well⁵:
One, aloof, stand sentinel.*

[*Exeunt Fairies.* TITANIA sleeps.]

Enter OBERON.

Obe. *What thou seest, when thou dost wake,
[Squeezes the flower on Titania's eye-lids.]
Do it for thy true love take;
Love, and languish for his sake:
Be it ounce⁶, or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar with bristled hair,
In thy eye that shall appear*

⁵ *Hence, away; &c.*] This, according to all the editions, is made part of the song; but I think without sufficient reason, as it appears to be spoken after the song is over. In the quarto 1600, it is given to the 2d Fairy; but the other division is better. STEEVENS.

⁶ *Be it ounce,*] The ounce is a small tiger, or tiger-cat. JOHNSON.

When thou wak'st, it is thy dear
Wake, when some vile thing is near.

[Exit.]

Enter LYSANDER and HERMIA.

Lys. Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way;
We'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Her. Be it so, Lysander: find you out a bed,
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

Lys. One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms, and one troth.

Her. Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear,
Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

Lys. O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence;
Love takes the meaning, in love's conference;
I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit;

So that but one heart we can make of it;

Two bosoms interchain'd with an oath;

So then, two bosoms, and a single troth.

Then, by your side no bed-room I deny,

For, lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

Her. Lysander, riddles very prettily:
Now much beshrew⁹ my manners and my pride,

⁷ O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence;] Understand the meaning of my innocence, or my innocent meaning. Let no suspicion of ill enter thy mind. JOHNSON.

⁸ Love takes the meaning, in love's conference.] In the conversation of those who are assured of each other's kindness, not suspicion but love takes the meaning. No malevolent interpretation is to be made, but all is to be received in the sense which love can find, and which love can dictate. JOHNSON.

This line is certainly intelligible. Dr. Johnson has explained it; but I think it requires a slight alteration to make it connect well with the former. I would read:

Love take the meaning in love's conference.

That is, Let love take the meaning. TYRWHITT.

⁹ Now much beshrew &c.] This word, of which the etymology is not exactly known, implies a sinister wish, and means the same as if she had said "now ill befall my manners, &c." STEVENS.

See Minshieu's etymology of it, which seems to be an imprecation or wish of such evil to one, as the venomous biting of the *shrew-mouse*.

TOLLET.

IF

If Hermia meant to say, Lysander lied.
 But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy
 Lie further off; in human modesty
 Such separation, as, may well be said,
 Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid:
 So far be distant; and good night, sweet friend:
 Thy love ne'er alter, till thy sweet life end!

Lys. Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;
 And then end life: when I end loyalty!
 Here is my bed: Pylides give thee all his rest!

Her. With this wisher's eyes be press'd!
 [They sleep.]

Enter PUCK.

Puck. Through the forest have I gone,
 But Athenian found I none,
 On whose eyes I might approve
 This flower's force in stirring love.
 Night and silence! who is here?
 Weeds of Athens he doth wear:
 This is he, my master said,
 Despised the Athenian maid;
 And here the maiden sleeping found,
 On the bank and dirty ground.
 Pretty foul! he durst not lie
 Near this lack-love, this kill-court'sy.
 Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
 All the power this charm doth owe:
 When thou wak'st, let love forbid
 Sleep his seat on thy eye-lid.
 So awake, when I am gone;
 For I must now to Oberon.

[Exit.]

Enter DEMETRIUS, and HELENA, running.

Hel. Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

Dem. I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.

Hel. O, wilt thou darkling leave me? do not so.

Dem. Stay on thy peril; I alone will go. [Exit DEM.]

¹ — [this kill-court'sy.] We meet with the same abbreviation in our author's *Venus and Adonis*:

“They all strain court'sy, who shall cope him first.” MALONE.
Hel.

Hel. O, I am out of breath, in this fond chace !
 The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace ².
 Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies ;
 For she hath blessed, and attractive eyes.
 How came her eyes so bright ? Not with salt tears :
 If so, my eyes are oftner wash'd than hers.
 No, no, I am as ugly as a bear ;
 For beasts that meet me, run away for fear :
 Therefore, no marvel, though Demetrius
 Do, as a monster, fly my presence thence.
 What wicked and dissembling glass of mine
 Made me compare with Hermia's shadow ?
 But who is here ? Lysander ! on thy face I see
 Dead or asleep ? I see no blood, no wound :—
 Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

Lys. And run through fire I will, for thy sweet sake.

Transparent Helena ! Nature shews art ³,
 That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
 Where is Demetrius ? O, how fit a word
 Is that vile name, to perish on my sword !

Hel. Do not say so, Lysander ; say no : so :
 What though he love your Hermia ? Look, what though ?
 Yet Hermia still loves you : then be content.

Lys. Content with Hermia ? No : I do repent
 The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
 Not Hermia, but Helena I love :
 Who will not change a raven for a dove ?
 The will of man is by his reason sway'd ;
 And reason says you are the worthier maid.
 Things growing are not ripe until their season :
 So, I, being young, till now ripe not to reason ;
 And touching now the point of human skill ⁴,

² — *my grace.*] My acceptableness, the favour that I can gain. JOHNS.

³ — *Nature shews art,*] Thus the quartos. The folio reads—*Nature*
her shews art,—perhaps an error of the press for—*Nature* shews her art.
 The editor of the second folio changed *her* to *here*. MALONE.

⁴ — *touching now the point of human skill,*] i. e. my senses being now
 at their utmost height of perfection. So, in *K. Henry VIII* :

“ I have touch'd the highest point of all my greatness.” STEEV.
 Reason

Reason becomes the marshal to my will⁵,
And leads me to your eyes; where I o'erlook
Love's stories, written in love's richest book.

Hel. Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?

When, at your hands, did I deserve this scorn?

Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,

That I did never, no, nor never can,

Deserve a sweet ligue from Demetrius' eye,

But you must find my insufficiency?

Good truth, you'd : ing wrong, good sooth, you do,

In such disdain. Pynner me to woo.

But fare you well, with force I must confess,

I thought you lost my more true gentleness⁶.

O, that a lady, of one man refus'd,

Could, of another, therefore be abus'd!

[*Exit.*

Hel. She sees not Hermia:—Hermia, sleep thou there;

And never may'st thou come Lysander near!

For, as a surfeit of the sweetest things

The deepest loathing to the stomach brings;

Or, as the heresies, that men do leave,

A hated most of those they did deceive;

So thou, my surfeit, and my heresy,

Shalt be hated, but the most of me!

[*5 Reason becomes the marshal to my will,*] That is, My will now follows reason. JOHNSON.

So, in *Macbeth*:

"Thou marshal'st me the way that I was going." STEEVENS.

A modern writer [*Letters of Literature*, 8vo. 1785,] contends that Dr. Johnson's explanation is inaccurate. The meaning, says he, is, "my will now obeys the command of my reason, not my will follows my reason. *Marshal* is a director of an army, of a turney, of a feast. Sydney has used *marshal* for *herald* or *poursuivant*, but improperly."

Of such slimy materials are many of the *hyper-criticisms* composed, to which the labours of the editors and commentators on Shakespeare have given rise. Who does not at once perceive, that Dr. Johnson, when he speaks of the will *following* reason, uses the word not literally, but metaphorically? "My will *follows* or obeys the dictates of reason." Or that, if this were not the case, he would yet be justified by the context, (*And leads me*—) and by the passage quoted from *Macbeth*.—The heralds, distinguished by the names of "*poursuivants* at arms," were likewise called *marshals*. See Minshew's *Dict.* 1617, in v. MALONE.

⁶—*true gentleness*.] *Gentleness* is equivalent to what, in modern language, we should call the *spirit of a gentleman*. PERCY.

And

And all my powers, address your love and might,
To honour Helen, and to be her knight! [Exit.]

Her. [*starting.*] Help me, Lyfander, help me! do thy best,
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!

Ah me, for pity!—what a dream was here?

Lyfander, look, how I do quake with fear:

Methought, a serpent eat my heart away,

And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.

Lyfander! what, remov'd? Lyfander!

What out of hearing? gone? no longer!

Alack, where are you? speak, an if you hear.

Speak, of all loves? I swoon almost!

No?—then I well perceive you are asleep.

Either death, or you, I'll find immediately. [Exit.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

The same. The Queen of Fairies lying asleep.

Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SMITT,
and STARVELING.

Bot. Are we all met?

Quin. Pat, pat; and here's a excellent convenient
place for our rehearsal: This green plot shall be our stage;
this hawthorn brake our tyring-house; and we will do it
in action, as we will do it before the duke.

Bot. Peter Quince,—

Quin. What say'st thou, bully Bottom?

Bot. There are things in this comedy of *Pyramus and Thisby*, that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw

⁷ *Speak, of all loves*;—] *Of all loves* is an adjuration more than once
used by our author. So, in the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act II. sc. viii:

“ — to send her your little page, *of all loves.*” STEEVENS.

⁸ In the time of Shakspeare, there were many companies of players,
sometimes five at the same time, contending for the favour of the pub-
lick. Of these some were undoubtedly very unskilful and very poor,
and it is probable that the design of this scene was to ridicule their ig-
norance, and the odd expedients to which they might be driven by the
want of proper decorations. Bottom was perhaps the head of a rival
house, and is therefore honoured with an ass's head. JOHNSON.

a sword

a sword to kill himself; which the ladies cannot abide.
How answer you that?

Snout. By'r'lakin, a parlous fear.

Star. I believe, we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

Bot. Not a whit; I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue, and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords; and that Pyramus is not kill'd indeed: and, for the more better assurance, tell them, that Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver: This will put them out of fear.

Quin. Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.

Bot. No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

Star. Fear it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in, God shield us! a lion among ladies, is a most dreadful thing: for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl, than your lion, living; and we ought to look to it.

Snout. Therefore, another prologue must tell, he is not a lion.

Bot. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect, —Ladies, or fair ladies, I would wish you, or, I would request you, or, I would entreat you, not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: No, I am no such thing; I am a man as other men are:—and there, indeed, let him name his name; and tell them plainly, he is Snug the joiner.

Quin.
2 By'r'lakin, a parlous fear.] By our ladykin, or little lady, as *is* *kins* is a corruption of, by my faith. *Parlous*, a word corrupted from *perilous*, i. e. dangerous. STEEVENS.

3 — in eight and six.] i. e. in alternate verses of eight and six syllables. MALONE.

4 No, I am no such thing; I am a man, as other men are:—and there, indeed, indeed,

Quin. Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things; that is, to bring the moon-light into a chamber: for you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moon-light.

Snug. Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

Bot. A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanack; find out moon-shine, find out moon-shine.

Quin. Yes, it doth shine that night.

Bot. Why, then you may leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open; and the moon may shine in at the casement.

Quin. Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say, he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of moon-shine. Then, there is another thing: we must have a wall in the great chamber; for Pyramus and Thisby, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

Snug. You can never bring in a wall.—What say you, Bottom?

Bot. Some man or other must present it wall; and let him have some plaister, or some lome, or some rough cast about him, to signify wall; or let him hold his finger thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

indeed, let him name his name; and tell them plainly, he is Snug the joiner.] There are probably many temporary allusions to particular incidents and characters scattered through our author's plays, which gave a poignancy to certain passages, while the events were recent, and the persons pointed at, yet living.—In the speech before us, I think it not improbable that he meant to allude to a fact which happened in his time, at an entertainment exhibited before queen Elizabeth. It is recorded in a manuscript collection of anecdotes, stories, &c. entitled, *Merry Passages and Feasts*, Ms. Harl. 6395:

“There was a spectacle presented to queen Elizabeth upon the water, and among others *Harry Goldingham* was to represent *Arion* upon the dolphin's back; but finding his voice to be very hoarse and unpleasant, when he came to perform it, he tears off his disguise, and swears he was none of *Arion*, nor he, but even honest *Harry Goldingham*; which blunt discovery pleased the queen better than if it had gone through in the right way:—yet he could order his voice to an instrument exceeding well.”

The collector of these *Merry Passages* appears to have been nephew to Sir Roger L'Estrange. MALONE.

Quin.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. Pyramus, you begin: when you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake⁵; and so every one according to his cue.

Enter PUCK behind.

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,

So near the cradle of the fairy queen?

What, a play toward? I'll be an auditor;

An actor too, perhaps, if I see cause.

Quin. Speak, Pyramus:—Thisby, stand forth.

Pyr. Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet,—

Quin. Odours, odours.

Pyr. —odours savours sweet:

So hath thy breath⁶, my dearest Thisby dear.—

But, hark, a voice! stay thou but here a while⁷,

And by-and-by I will to thee appear.

[*Exit.*

Puck. A stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here⁸!

[*aside.—Exit.*

This. Must I speak now?

Quin. Ay, marry, must you: for you must understand, he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

This. Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,

Of colour like the red rose on triumphant brier,

Most briskly juvenal^{*}, and eke most lovely Jew,

As true as trust horse, that yet would never tire,

⁵ — that brake;] *Brake* anciently signified a thicker or bush. STEEV.

Brake in the west of England is used to express a large extent of ground overgrown with furze, and appears both here and in the next scene to convey the same idea. HENLEY.

⁶ So hath thy breath,—] Mr. Pope reads—So *dear*, instead of—So *dear*, but nothing, I think, is got by the change. I suspect two lines to have been lost; the first of which rhymed with “savour sweet,” and the other with “here a while”. The line before us appears to me to refer to some thing that has been lost. MALONE.

⁷ — a while,] Thus the old copies. Mr. Theobald reads a *whit*, but this is no rhyme to *sweet*. The corruption arose, I believe, from a different cause. See the last note. MALONE.

⁸ — than e'er play'd here,] I suppose he means in that theatre where the piece was acting. STEEVENS.

^{*} *juvenal*,] i. e. a young man. So, Falstaff, “—the *juvenal* thy master.” STEEVENS.

I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

Quin. Ninus' tomb, man: Why you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus: you speak all your part at once, cues and all⁹.—Pyramus enter; your cue is past; it is, *never tire*.

Re-enter PUCK, and BOTTOM with an ass's head.

Thisy. O,—*As true as truest horse, that yet would never tire.*

Pyr. *If I were fair¹, Thisby, I were only thine:—*

Quin. O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted. Pray masters! fly, masters! help! [*Exeunt Clowns.*

Puck. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through
brier²;

Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,

A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire;
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar and burn—
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn. [*Exit.*

Bot. Why do they run away? this is a knavery of them, to make me afraid³.

Re-enter SNOOT.

Snoot. O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee⁴?

Bot. What do you see? you see an ass' head of your own; Do you?

⁹ — cues and all.] A cue, in stage cant, is the last words of the preceding speech, and serves as a hint to him who is to speak next.

STEEVENS.

¹ *If I were fair, &c.*] Perhaps we ought to point thus: *If I were, [i. e. as true, &c.] fair Thisby, I were only thine.* MALONE.

² *Through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier;*] Here are two syllables wanting. Perhaps it was written:—*Through bog, through mire.* JOHNSON.

³ —to make me afraid.] *Afraid* is from *to fear*, by the old form of the language, as *an hungered*, from *to hunger*. So *adry*, for *thirsty*.

JOHNSON.

⁴ *O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee?*] It is plain by Bottom's answer, that Snoot mentioned an *ass's head*. Therefore we should read:

Snoot. *O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee? An ass's head?* JOHNSON.

Re-enter

Re-enter QUINCE.

Quin. Bless thee, Bottom ! bless thee ! thou art translated. [Exit.

Bot. I see their knavery : this is to make an ass of me ; to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can : I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid. [sings.

The ouzel-cock, so black of hue⁵,

With orange-tawny bill,

The thrush with his note so true⁶,

The wren with little quill ;

* Tit. What angel wakes me from my flowery bed ? ? [waking.

Bot. *The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,*

The plain-song cuckoo⁸ gray,

Whose note full many a man doth mark,

And dares not answer, nay ;—

for

⁵ *The ouzel-cock, so black of hue, &c.]* In *The Arbor of Amorous Devices*, 4to. bl. l. are the following lines :

“ The chatter, the pie, the jay, and eke the quail,

“ *The thrush-cock that was so black of beak.*”

The former leaf and the title-page being torn out of the copy I consulted, I am unable either to give the two preceding lines of the stanza, or to ascertain the date of the book.

The ouzel-cock is generally understood to be the cock blackbird. P. Holland, however, in his translation of Pliny's *Nat. Hist.* b. x. ch. 24. represents the ouzel and the blackbird, as different birds. See also Mr. Lever's *Museum*. STEEVENS.

⁶ *The thrush*.— It appears from the following passage in Thomas Newton's *Herball to the Bible*, 8vo. 1587, that the *thrush* is a distinct bird from the *thrush* : “ There is also another sorte of myrte or myrtle, which is wild ; whose berries the mavises, *thrushes*, owfells, and *thrushes* delight much to eat.” STEEVENS.

⁷ *What angel wakes me from my flowery bed ?* Perhaps a parody on a line in the *Spanish Tragedy*, often ridiculed by the poets of our author's time :

“ What outcry calls me from my naked bed ?”

The *Spanish Tragedy* was entered on the Stationers' books in 1592.

MALONE.

⁸ *plain-song cuckoo, &c.]* That is, the cuckoo, who, having no variety of strains, sings in plain song, or in *plano cantu* ; by which ex-

pression

for indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird who would give a bird the lie, though he cry, *cuckoo*, never so.

Tita. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again :
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note,
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape ;
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me,
On the first view, to say, to swear, I love thee.

Bot. Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that : And yet to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days : The more the pity, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek⁹, upon occasion.

Tita. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

Bot. Not so, neither : but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

Tita. Out of this wood do not desire to go,
Thou shalt remain here whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit, of no common rate ;
The summer still doth tend upon my state,
And I do love thee : therefore, go with me ;
I'll give thee fairies to attend on thee
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing, while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep :
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so,
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go.—

pression the uniform modulation or simplicity of the *chaunt* was anciently distinguished, in opposition to *prick-song* or variegated music sung by note. Skelton introduces the birds singing the different parts of the service at the funeral of his favourite sparrow : among the rest is the cuckoo. p. 227. edit. Lond. 1736 :

“ But with a large and a long

“ To kepe just *playne songe*,

“ Our chanter shall be yo^r *cuckone*.” T. WARTON.

⁹ — *gleek*,] Joke or scoff. FOP.

Gleek was originally a game at cards. The word is often used by our ancient comick writers in the same sense as by our author. Mr. Lambé observes in his notes on the ancient metrical history of the *Battle of Floddon*, that in the North to *gleek* is to *deceive*, or *beguile* ; and that the reply made by the queen of the fairies, proves this to be the meaning of it. STEEVENS.

Peace-

Pease-blossom! Cobweb! Moth! and Mustard-seed!

Enter four Fairies.

1. *Fair.* Ready.

2. *Fair.* And I.

3. *Fair.* And I.

4. *Fair.* And I.

All. Where shall we go?

Tita. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;
Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks, and dewberries¹,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries;
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,
And, for night tapers, crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes²,
To have my love to bed, and to arise;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moon-beams from his sleeping eyes:
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

¹ — dewberries.] *Dewberries* strictly and properly are the fruit of one of the species of wild bramble called the creeping or the lesser bramble: but as they stand here among the more delicate fruits, they must be understood to mean *gooseberries*, which are also of the bramble kind.

HAWKINS.

Dewberries are *gooseberries*, which are still so called in several parts of the kingdom. HENLEY.

² — the fiery glow-worm's eyes.] I know not how Shakspeare, who commonly derived his knowledge of nature from his own observation, happened to place the glow-worm's light in his eyes, which is only in his tail. JOHNSON.

The blunder is not in Shakspeare, but in those who have construed too literally a poetical expression. It appears from every line of his writings that he had studied with attention the book of nature, and was an accurate observer of every object that fell within his notice. He must have known that the light of the glow-worm was seated in the tail; but surely a poet is justified in calling the luminous part of a glow-worm the eye. It is a liberty we take in plain prose; for the point of greatest brightness in a furnace is commonly called the eye of it.

Dr. Johnson might have arraigned him with equal propriety for sending his fairies to light their tapers at the fire of the glow-worm, which in *Hamlet* he terms *uneffectual*:

“The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,

“And ’gins to pale his uneffectual fire.” MASON.

1. *Fai.* Hail, mortal³!

2. *Fai.* Hail!

3. *Fai.* Hail!

4. *Fai.* Hail!

Bot. I cry your worships mercy, heartily.—I beseech, your worship's name?

Cob. Cobweb.

Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance⁴, good master Cobweb: If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you.—Your name, honest gentleman⁵?

Pease. Pease-blossom.

Bot. I pray you, commend me to mistress Squash, your mother⁶, and to master Peascod, your father. Good master

³ *Hail, mortal!*] The old copies read—hail, mortal, *bail!* The second *bail* was clearly intended for another of the "fairies," so as that each of them should address Bottom. The regulation now adopted was proposed by Mr. Steevens. MALONE.

⁴ *I shall desire you of more acquaintance,*] This line has been very unnecessarily altered. Such phraseology was very common to many of our ancient writers. So in *Lusty Juventus*, a morality, 1561: "I shall desire you of better acquaintance." Again in *An Humorous Days Mirth*, 1599: "I do desire you of more acquaintance." STEEVENS.

The alteration in the modern editions was made on the authority of the first folio, which reads in the next speech but one—"I shall desire of you more acquaintance." But the old reading is undoubtedly the true one. MALONE.

⁵ — *good master Cobweb: If I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you.—Your name, honest gentleman?*] In *The Maid's Metamorphosis*, a comedy by Lilly, there is a dialogue between some foresters and a troop of fairies, very similar to the present:

"*Mopsa.* I pray, sir, what might I call you?"

"1. *Fai.* My name is Penny.

"*Mop.* I am sorry I cannot purse you.

"*Frisco.* I pray you, sir, what might I call you?"

"2. *Fai.* My name is Cricket.

"*Fris.* I would I were a chimney for your sake."

The Maid's Metamorphosis was not printed till 1600, but was probably written some years before. Mr. Warton says, (*History of English Poetry*, vol. II. p. 393.) that Lilly's last play appeared in 1597.

MALONE.

⁶ — *mistress Squash, your mother,*] *Squash* is an immature peascod. So, in *Twelfth-Night*, Act I. sc. v: "as a *squash* is, before 'tis a peascod." STEEVENS.

Pease-

Rease-blossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too.—Your name, I beseech you, sir?

Mus. Mustard-seed.

Bot. Good master Mustard-seed, I know your patience⁷ well: that same cowardly, giant-like, ox-beef hath devoured many a gentleman of your house: I promise you your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you, more acquaintance, good master Mustard-seed.

Tita. Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.

The moon, methinks, looks with a watery eye;
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.

Tie up my love's tongue⁸, bring him silently. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Another part of the Wood.

Enter OBERON.

Ob. I wonder, if Titania be awak'd;
Then, what it was that next came in her eye,
Which she must dote on in extremity.

Enter PUCK.

Heid comes my messenger.—How now, mad spirit?
What night-rule⁹ now about this haunted grove?

Puck. My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,

⁷ —*patience,*] By *patience* is meant, standing still in a mustard-pot to be eaten with the beef, on which it was a constant attendant.

COLLINS.

⁸ —*my love's tongue,*] The old copies read—*my lover's tongue.*

STEEVENS.

The emendation was made by M. Pope. MALONE.

⁹ *What night-rule—*] *Night-rule* in this place should seem to mean, what frolick of the night, what revelry is going forward? So, in *Tom Tyler and his Wife*, 1661: "Marry, here is good *rule*." It appears, from the old song of *Robin Goodfellow*, in the third volume of Dr. Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, that it was the office of this waggish spirit "to viewe the night-sports." STEEVENS.

A crew of patches¹, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play,
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.
The shallowest thick-skin of that barren fort²,
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
Forsook his scene, and enter'd in a brake:
When I did him at this advantage take,³
An ass's nowl³ I fixed on his head;
Anon, his Thisbe must be answer'd,
And forth my mimick⁴ comes: When they him spy,
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in fort⁵,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report

¹ — *patches*.] *Patch* was in old language used as a term of opprobry; perhaps with much the same import as we use *ragamuffin*, or *tatter-demon*. JOHNSON.

This common opprobrious term, probably took its rise from *Patch*, cardinal Wolsey's fool. In the western counties, *off-patch* is still used for *perverse, ill-natured fool*. T. WARTON.

The name was rather taken from the *patch'd* or *pyed* coats worn by the fools or jesters of those times. STEEVENS.

I should suppose *patch* to be merely a corruption of the Italian *pazzo*, which signifies properly a *fool*. So, in the *Merchant of Venice*, Act II. sc. v. Shylock says of Launcelot, *The patch is kind enough*;—after having just called him, *that fool of Hagar's offspring*. TYRWHITT.

² — *fort*.] See note 5, MALONE.

³ — *nowl*.] A head. Saxon JOHNSON.

⁴ — *my mimick*.] This is the reading of the folio. The quarto printed by Fisher has—*minnick*; that by Roberts, *minnock*: both evidently corruptions. The line has been explained as if it related to *Thisbe*; but it does not relate to her, but to *Pyramus*. Bottom had just been playing that part, and had retired into a brake; (according to Quince's direction: "When you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake.") "Anon his *Thisbe* must be answered, *And forth my mimick* (i. e. my actor) *comes*." In this there seems no difficulty.

Mimick is used as synonymous to *actor*, by Decker, in his *Guls Horne-booke*, 1609: "Draw what troop you can from the stage after you; the *mimicks* are beholden to you for allowing them elbow room." Again, in his *Satiromastix*, 1602: "Thou [B. Jonson] hast forgot how thou amblest in a leather pich by a play-wagon in the highway, and took'st mad *Jeronymo's* part, to get service amongst the *mimicks*." MALONE.

⁵ — *fort*.] Company. So above: "—*that barren fort*; and in Waller: "*A fort of lusty shepherds strive*." JOHNSON.

Over themselves, and madly sweep the sky;
 So, at his sight, away his fellows fly:
 And, at our stamp⁶, here o'er and o'er one falls;
 He murder cries, and help from Athens calls.
 Their sense, thus weak, lost with their fears, thus strong,
 Made senseless things begin to do them wrong:
 For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch;
 Some, sleeves; some, hats: from yielders all things catch.
 I led them on in this distracted fear,
 And left sweet Pyramus translated there:
 When in that moment (so it came to pass)
 Titania wak'd, and straightway lov'd an ass.
 ,*Obe.* This falls out better than I could devise.
 But hast thou yet latch'd⁷ the Athenian's eyes
 With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

⁶ *And, at our stamp.*—] This seems to be a vicious reading. Fairies are never represented stamping, or of a size that should give force to a stamp, nor could they have distinguished the stamps of Puck from those of their own companions: I read:

And at a stamp here o'er and o'er one falls. JOHNSON.

Adhering to the old reading. The *stamp* of a fairy might be efficacious, though not loud; neither is it necessary to suppose, when supernatural beings are spoken of, that the size of the agent determines the force of the action. That fairies did *stamp* to some purpose, may be known from the following passage in *Olaus Magnus de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*.—"Vero saltum aëleo profundè in terram imprefferant, ut locus insigni ardore orbiculariter peresus, non parit arenti redivivum cespitem gramen." Shakespeare's own authority, however, is most decisive. See the conclusion of the first scene of the fourth act:

"—Come, my queen, take hand with me,

"And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be." STEEVENS.

Our "grandams maides were woont to set a boll of milke before *Incubus*, and his cousin *Robin Goodfellow*, for grinding of malt or mustard, and sweeping the house at midnight: and—he would chafe exceedingly if the maid or good wife of the house, having compassion of his nakednes, laid anie clothes for him, besides his melle of white bread and milke, which was his standing fee: for in that case he saith, What have we here? Hemton hamten here will I never more tread, nor *stampen*." *Discoverie of Witchcraft* by Reginald Scott, 1584, p. 85.

ANONYMOUS.

⁷ —latch'd] or letch'd, lick'd over; *lecher*, to lick, French.

HANMER.

In the North, it signifies to *infect*. STEEVENS.

Puck.

Puck. I took him sleeping,—that is finish'd too,—
And the Athenian woman by his side;
That, when he wak'd, of force she must be ey'd.

Enter DEMETRIUS and HERMIA.

Obe. Stand close; this is the same Athenian.

Puck. This is the woman, but not this the man.

Dem. O, why rebake you him that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

Her. Now I but chide, but I should use thee worse;
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood⁸, plunge in the deep,
And kill me too.

The sun was not so true unto the day,
As he to me: Would he have stol'n away
From sleeping Hermia? I'll believe as soon
This whole earth may be bor'd; and that the moon
May through the center creep, and so dispense
Her brother's noon-tide with the Antipodes⁹.
It cannot be, but thou hast murder'd him;
So should a murderer look; so dead¹⁰, so grim.

Dem. So should the murder'd look; and so should I,
Pierc'd through the heart with your stern cruelty:
Yet you, the murderer, look as bright, as clear,
As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

Her. What's this to my Lysander? where is he?
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

Dem. I had rather give his carcass to my hounds.

Her. Out, dog! out, cur! thou driv'st me past the
bounds

⁸ *Being o'er shoes in blood,*] An allusion to the proverb, *Over shoes, over boots.* JOHNSON.

⁹ *—with the Antipodes.*] i. e. on the other side of the globe. EDWARDS.

¹⁰ *—so dead.*] So again in *K. Henry IV.* P. II. Act. I. sc. iii:

“Even such a man, so faint, so spiritless,

“So dull, so dead in look, so awe-begone. STEEVENS.

So also in Lodge's *Dorastus and Fawnia*: “—if thou marry in age, thy wife's fresh colours will breed in thee dead thoughts and suspicion.

MALONE.

Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him then?
Henceforth be never number'd among men!

O! once tell true, tell true, even for my sake;
Durst thou have look'd upon him, being awake,
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping²? O brave touch³!
Should not a worm, an adder, do so much?

An adder did it; for with doubler tongue
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

Dem. You spend your passion on a mispris'd mood⁴:
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood;
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

Her. I pray thee tell me then that he is well.

Dem. An if I could, what should I get therefore?

Her. A privilege, never to see me more.—

And from thy hated presence part I so⁵:

See me no more, whether he be dead or no. [Exit.]

Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vein:

Here, therefore, for a while I will remain.

So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow,

For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe;

Which now in some slight measure it will pay,

If for his tender here I make some stay. [lies down.]

Obe. What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite,

And laid the love-juice on some true love's sight:

Of thy misprision must perforce ensue

Some true love turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.

² *Durst thou have look'd upon him, being awake,*

And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? She means, Hast thou kill'd him sleeping, whom, when awake, thou didst not dare to look upon?

MALONE.

³ — *O brave touch!* Touch in Shakespeare's time was the same with our exploit, or rather stroke. A brave touch, a noble stroke, *un grand coup*. JOHNSON.

A touch anciently signified a trick. In the old black letter story of *Howleghas*, it is always used in that sense. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *mispris'd mood:* Mistaken; so below *misprision* is mistake.

JOHNSON.

Mood is anger, or perhaps rather in this place, *capricious fancy*.

MALONE.

⁵ — *part I so:* So, which is not in the old copy, was inserted for the sake of both metre and rhyme, by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

Puck. Then fate o'er-rules; that, one man holding troth,
A million fail, confounding oath on oath.

Obe. About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And Helena of Athens look thou find:
All fancy-sick she is, and pale of cheer
With sighs of love, that cost the fresh blood dear:
By some illusion see thou bring her here;
I'll charm his eyes, against she do appear.

Puck. I go, I go; look, how I go;
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow.

[*Exit.*

Obe. Flower of this purple dye,
Hit with Cupid's archery⁶,
Sink in apple of his eye!
When his love he doth espy,
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.—
When thou wak'st, if she be by,
Beg of her for remedy.

Re-enter Puck.

Puck. Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand;
And the youth mistook by me,
Pleading for a lover's fee;
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!

Obe. Stand aside: the noise they make,
Will cause Demetrius to awake.

Puck. Then will two, at once, woo one;
That must needs be sport alone:
And those things do best please me,
That befall preposterously.

Enter LYSANDER, and HELENA.

Lys. Why should you think, that I should woo in scorn?
Scorn and derision never come in tears:

⁶ *Hit with Cupid's archery,*] This alludes to what was said before:
—the bolt of Cupid fell:

It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound, STEEV.
Look

Look, when I vow, I weep; and vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.

How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
Bearing the badge of faith to prove them true?

Hel. You do advance your cunning more and more.
When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray!

These vows are Hermia's; Will you give her o'er?
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh:
Your vows, to her and me, put in two scales,
Will even weigh; and both as light as tales.

Lys. I had no judgement, when to her I swore.

Hel. Nor none, in my mind, now you give her o'er.

Lys. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.

Dem. [*awaking.*] O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect,
divine!

To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal isuddy. O, how ripe in show

Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!
That pure congealed white, high Taurus' snow⁷,
Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow,
When thou hold'st up thy hand: O let me kiss
This princess of pure white⁸, this seal of bliss⁹!

Hel. O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me, for your merriment.
If you were civil, and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.
Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
But you must join, in souls¹, to mock me too?

If

⁷ — *Taurus' snow,*] Taurus is the name of a range of mountains in Asia. JOHNSON.

⁸ *This princess of pure white,*—] So in Wyatt's poems;
"—of beauty princess chief." STEVENS.

In the *Winter's Tale* we meet with a similar expression:

"—good sooth, she is

"The Queen of curds and cream." MALONE.

⁹ — *seal of bliss!*) He has in *Measure for Measure*, the same image:

"But my kisses bring again,

"Seals of love, but seal'd in vain." JOHNSON.

¹ — *join in souls,*] i. e. join heartily, unite in the same mind. Shakspeare in *Henry V.* uses an expression not unlike this:

If you were men, as men you are in show,
 You would not use a gentle lady so;
 To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,
 When, I am sure, you hate me with your hearts.
 You both are rivals, and love Hermia;
 And now both rivals, to mock Helena:
 A trim exploit, a manly enterprize²,
 To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes,
 With your derision! None, of noble sort³,
 Would so offend a virgin; and extort⁴
 A poor soul's patience⁴, all to make you sport.

Lys. You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so;
 For you love Hermia; this, you know, I know:
 And here, with all good will, with all my heart,
 In Hermia's love I yield you up my part;

"For we will bear, note, and believe in heart;"
 i. e. heartily believe; and in *Measure for Measure* he talks of electing
 with special soul. In *Troilus and Cressida*, Ulysses, relating the character
 of Hector as given him by Æneas, says:

"—— with private soul

"Did in great Ilion thus translate him to me."

And, in *All Fools*, by Chapman, 1605, is the same expression as that in
 the text:

"Happy, in soul, only by winning her."

Again in *Pierce Penniless his supplication to the Devil*, 1592:—"whose
 subversion in soul they have vow'd." STEEVENS.

A similar phraseology is found in *Measure for Measure*:

"Is't not enough thou hast suborn'd these women

"To accuse this worthy man, but in foul mouth

"To call him villain! MALONE.

I rather believe the line should be read thus:

But you must join, ill souls, to mock me too. TYRWHITT.

² *A trim exploit, a manly enterprize, &c.*] This is written much in
 the manner and spirit of Juno's reproach to Venus in the 4th book of
 the *Æneid*:

"Egregiam vero laudem et spolia ampla refertis,

"Tuque puerque tuus; magnum et memorabile nomen,

"Una dolo divum si femina victa duorum est." STEEVENS.

³ — none, of noble sort,] *Sort* is here used for degree or quality. So,
 in the old ballad of *Jane Shore*:

"Long time I lived in the court,

"With lords and ladies of great sort." MALONE.

⁴ — extort a poor soul's patience,] Harra's, torment. JOHNSON.

And

And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
Whom I do love, and will do to my death.

Hel. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

Dem. Lysander, keep thy *Hermia*; I will none:

I've'er I lov'd her, all that love is gone.

My heart with her but, as guest-wife, sojourn'd;

And now to Helen is it home return'd⁵,

There to remain.

Lys. Helen, it is not so.

Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Lest, to thy peril, thou aby it dear.—

Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

Enter HERMIA.

Her. Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,

The ear more quick of apprehension makes;

Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,

It pays the hearing double recompence:—

Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;

Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy found.

But why unkindly did'st thou leave me so?

Lys. Why should he stay, whom love doth press to go?

Her. What love could press Lysander from my side?

Lys. Lysander's love, that would not let him bide,

Fair Helena; who more engilds the night

Than all yon fiery oes⁶ and eyes of light.

⁵ *My heart with her but, as guest-wife, sojourn'd;*

And now to Helen is it home return'd,] So, in our author's 109th Sonnet:

"This is my home of love; if I have rang'd,

"Like him that travels, I return again."

The old copies read—to her. Corrected by Dr. Johnson. MALONE.

My heart &c.] So Prior:

"No matter what beauties I saw in my way,

"They were but my visits, but thou art my home." JOHNSON.

⁶ — *all yon fiery oes]* Shakspeare uses O for a circle. So, in the prologue to *K. Henry. V.*

"—— can we crowd

"Within this little O, the very casques

"That did affright the air at Agincourt?" STEEVENS.

D'Ewes's *Journal of Queen Elizabeth's Parliaments*, p. 650, mentions a patent to make spangles and oes of gold; and I think haberdashiers call small curtain rings, O's, as being circular. TOLLET.

Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,
The hate I bare thee made me leave thee so?

Her. You speak not as you think; it cannot be.

Hel. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!

Now I perceive they have conjoin'd, all three,
To fashion this false sport in spite of me.
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspir'd, have you with these contriv'd
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us,—O, is all now forgot?
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Have with our needles created both one flower,

¹ *The sisters' vows*,—] We might read more elegantly,—*The sister vows*, and a few lines lower,—*All school-day friendship*. The latter emendation was made by Mr. Pope; but changes scarcely for the sake of elegance ought to be admitted with great caution. MALONE.

² *For parting us,—O, is all now forgot?*] The word *now* not in the old copies. For the emendation the present editor is answerable. The editor of the second folio, to complete the metre, introduced the word and;—"O, and is all forgot?" It stands so awkwardly, that I am persuaded it was not the author's word. MALONE.

³ — *artificial gods*,] *Artificial* is ingenious, artful. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Have with our needles &c.*] In the old copies the word is written *needles*. MALONE.

It was probably written by Shakspeare *needls*, (a common contraction in the inland counties at this day,) otherwise the verse will be inharmonious. See Gammer Gurton's *Needle*. The same ideas occur in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, 1609:

" ———— she

" Would ever with Mirina be:

" Be't when they weav'd the sleded silk,

" With fingers long, small, white as milk,

" Or when she would with sharp *needl* wound

" The cambrick, &c." A

In the age of Shakspeare many contractions were used. Ben Jonson has *wber* for *whether* in the prologue to his *Sad Shepherd*, and in lord Sterling's *Darius* is *sport for support*, and *rewards for towards*. STEEV.

In the old editions of these plays many words of two syllables are printed at length, though intended to be pronounced as one. Thus *spirit* is almost always so written, though often used as a monosyllable; and *whether*, though intended often to be contracted, is always (I think, improperly,) written at length. MALONE.

Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
 Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
 As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,
 Had been incorporate. So we grew together,
 Like to a double cherry, seeming parted;
 But yet a union in partition,
 Two lovely berries moulded on one stem:
 So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart;
 Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
 Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.²
 And will you rent our ancient love asunder,
 To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
 It is not friendly, 'tis not maidenly:
 Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it;
 Though I alone do feel the injury.

Her. I am amazed at your passionate words:
 I scorn you not; it seems that you scorn me.

Hel. Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,
 To follow me, and praise my eyes and face?
 And made your other love, Demetrius,
 (Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,)
 To call me goddess, nymph, divine, and rare,
 Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this
 To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander
 Deny your love, so rich within his soul,
 And tender me, forsooth, affection;
 But by your setting on, by your consent?
 What though I be not so in grace as you,
 So hung upon with love, so fortunate;
 But miserable most, to love unlov'd?
 This you should pity, rather than despise.

Her. I understand not what you mean by this.

Hel.

² *Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,*

Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.] The old copy reads
 —life coats, &c. Corrected by Mr. Martin Folkes.

According to the rules of heraldry, the *first* house only, (e. g. a father
 who has a son living, or an elder brother as distinguished from a younger,)
 has a right to bear the family coat. The son's coat is distinguished from
 the father's by a label; the younger brother's from the elder's by a
 mullet. The same crest is common to both. Helena therefore means
 to say, that she and her friend were as closely united, as much *one* person,

Hel. Ay, do, *persever*³, counterfeit sad looks,
 Make mouths upon me when I turn my back;
 Wink at each other; hold the sweet jest up:
 This sport, well carry'd, shall be chronicled.
 If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
 You would not make me such an argument⁴.
 But, fare ye well: 'tis partly mine own fault;
 Which death, or absence, soon shall remedy.

Lyf. Stay, gentle Helena; hear my excuse;
 My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

Hel. O excellent!

Her. Sweet, do not scorn her so.

Dem. "If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

Lyf. Thou canst compel no more than she entreat;
 Thy threats have no more strength, than her weak prayers⁵.—
 Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do;
 I swear by that which I will lose for thee,

To prove him false, that says I love thee not.

Dem. I say, I love thee more than he can do.

Lyf. If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

Dem. Quick, come,—

Her. Lyfander, whereto tends all this?

Lyf. Away, you Ethiop!

Dem. No, no; he'll—Sir⁶,

Seem

as if they were *both of the first house*; as if they both had the privilege *due but to one person*, (viz. to him of the first house,) the right of bearing the family coat without any distinguishing mark. MALONE.

³ — *persever*.] The word was formerly so pronounced. So, in *All's Well that ends well*, Act IV. sc. ii:

"——— say, thou art *fine*, and ever

" My love, as it begins, *so* shall *persever*." STEEVENS.

⁴ — *such an argument*.] Such a *subject* of light merriment. JOHNS.
 So, in the first part of *King Henry IV.* Act II. sc. ii.

"——— it would be *argument* for a week, &c. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *than her weak prayers*.] i. e. prayers, entreaties. The old copies read—*her weak praise*. Mr. Theobald proposed the reading now adopted. A noun thus formed from the verb, to *pray*, is much in our author's manner; and the transcriber's ear might have been easily deceived by the similarity of sounds. MALONE.

⁶ No, no, *be'll*—*Sir*.] This passage, like almost all those in these plays in which there is a sudden transition, or the sense is hastily broken off, is much corrupted in the old copies. The present text is formed
 from

Seem to break loose ; take on, as you would follow ;
But yet come not : you are a tame man, go !

Lys. Hang off, thou cat, thou burr : vile thing, let loose ;
Or I will shake thee from me, like a serpent.

Her. Why are you grown so rude ? what change is this,
Sweet love ?

Lys. Thy love ? out, tawny Tartar, out !
Out, loathed medicine ! hated potion, hence !⁷

Her. Do you not jest ?

Hel. Yes, 'sooth ; and so do you.

Lys. Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

Dem. I would, I had your bond : for, I perceive,
A weak bond holds you ; I'll not trust your word.

Lys. What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead ?
Although I hate her, I'll not harm her so.

Her. What, can you do me greater harm, than hate ?

Hate me wherefore ? O me ! what news, my love ?

Am not I Hermia ? Are not you Lysander ?

I am as fair now, as I was erewhile.

Since night, you lov'd me ; yet, since night, you left me :

Why, then you left me, — O, the gods forbid ! —

In earnest, shall I say ?

Lys. Ay, by my life ;
And never did desire to see thee more.

Therefore, be out of hope, of question, doubt⁸,

Be certain, nothing truer ; 'tis no jest,

That I do hate thee, and love Helena.

Her. O me ! you juggler ! you canker-blossom⁹ !

You

from the quarto printed by Fisher and the first folio. The words "*be'll*" are not in the folio, and *Sir* is not in the quarto. Demetrius, I suppose, would say, No, no ; he'll not have resolution to disengage himself from Hermia. But turning abruptly to Lysander, he addresses him ironically : — *Sir*, seem to break loose ; &c. MALONE.

⁷ — *bated potion, hence !*] The old copies have *O* before *bated*. Corrected by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

⁸ — *of question, doubt,*] The old copies read — *of* doubt. The correction was made by Mr. Pope. MALONE.

⁹ *O tell you jugler ! you canker-blossom !*] *Juggler* in this line is used as a trifling word : So again, in *K. Henry VI.* P. I.

"She and the dauphin have been juggling."

So a tickling, wrestler, and many more. MALONE.

By the *canker-blossom* is here meant a worm that preys on the leaves

You thief of love! what, have you come by night,
And stol'n my love's heart from him?

Hel. Fine, i'faith!

Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie! you counterfeit, you puppet, you!

Her. Puppet! why so? Ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures, she hath urg'd her height;
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.—
And are you grown so high in his esteem,
Because I am so dwarfish, and so low?
How low am I, thou painted maypole? speak;
How low am I? I am not yet so low,
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

Hel. I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me: I was never curst¹;
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;
I am a right maid for my cowardice;
Let her not strike me: You, perhaps, may think,
Because she's something lower than myself,
That I can match her.

Her. Lower! hark, again.

Hel. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.
I evermore did love you, Hermia,
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd you;
Save that, in love unto Demetrius,
I told him of your stealth unto this wood:
He follow'd you; for love I follow'd him.
But he hath chid me hence; and threaten'd me
To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too:
And now, so you will let me quiet go,
To Athens will I bear my folly back,
And follow you no further: Let me go:

or buds of flowers, always beginning in the middle. So, in this play,
Act II, sc. iii:

"Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds." STEELE.

¹ — I was never curst;] Perverse; wicked, MALONE.

You

You see how simple and how fond I am².

Her. Why, get you gone: Who is't that hinders you?

Hel. A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

Her. What, with Lyfander?

Hel. With Demetrius.

Lys. Be not afraid: she shall not harm thee, Helena.

Dem. No, sir; she shall not, though you take her part.

Hel. O, when she's angry, she is keen and shrew'd;

She was a vixen when she went to school;

And, though she be but little, she is fierce.

Her. Little again? nothing but low and little?—

Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?

Let me come to her.

Lys. Get you gone, you dwarf;

You minimus, of hind'ring knot-grass made³;

You bead, you acorn.

Dem. You are too officious,

In her behalf that scorns your services.

Let her alone; speak not of Helena;

Take not her part: for if thou dost intend

Never so little shew of love to her,

Thou shalt aby it⁴.

Lys. Now she holds me not;

Now follow, if thou dar'st, to try whose right,

Or thine or mine⁵, is most in Helena.

Dem. Follow? nay, I'll go with thee, cheek by jole.

[*Exeunt* LYSANDER and DEMETRIUS.]

Her. You, mistress, all this coil is 'long of you:

² — how fond] i. e. foolish. See Vol. III. p. 66, n. 5. STEEVENS.

³ — of hind'ring knot-grass made;] It appears that knot-grass was anciently supposed to prevent the growth of any animal or child. Beaumont and Fletcher mention this property of it in the *Knight of the burning pestle*, and in the *Coxcomb*. Daisy roots were supposed to have the same effect. STEEVENS.

⁴ *Thou shalt aby it.*] To aby, is to pay dear for, to suffer. STEEV.

⁵ Or thine or mine,—] The old copies read—*Of thine*. The emendation is Mr. Theobald's. I am not sure that the old reading is corrupt. If the line had run—"Of mine or thine," I should have suspected that the phrase was borrowed from the Latin:—Now follow, to try whose right of property,—of *meum* or *tuum*,—is the greatest in Helena.

MALONE.

Nay, go not back.

Hel. I will not trust you, I;

Nor longer stay in your curst company.

Your hands, than mine, are quicker for a fray;

My legs are longer though, to run away.

[*Exit.*

Her. I am amaz'd, and know not what to say.

[*Exit, pursuing HELENA.*

Obe. This is thy negligence: still thou mistak'st,
Or else commit'st thy knaveries wilfully.

Puck. Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.

Did not you tell me, I should know the man

By the Athenian garments he had on?

And so far blameless proves my enterprize,

That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes:

And so far am I glad it so did sort⁶,

As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

Obe. Thou see'st, these lovers seek a place to fight:

Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;

The starry welkin cover thou anon

With drooping fog, as black as Acheron;

And lead these testy rivals so astray,

As one come not within another's way.

Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue,

Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong;

And sometime rail thou like Demetrius;

And from each other look thou lead them thus,

Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep

With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep:

Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye;

Whose liquor hath this virtuous property⁷,

To take from thence all error, with his might,

And make his eye-balls roll with wonted light.

When they next wake, all this derision

Shall seem a dream, and fruitless vision;

And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,

With league, whose date till death shall never end.

⁶ — *so did sort,*] So happen in the issue. JOHNSON.

⁷ — *virtuous property.*] Salutiferous. So he calls, in the *Tenpest*,
poisonous dew, wicked dew. JOHNSON.

Whiles I in this affair do thee employ,
I'll to my queen, and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste;
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,⁸
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger;
At whose approach, ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to church-yards: damned spirits all,
That in cross-ways and floods have burial⁹,
Already to their wormy beds are gone;
For fear lest day should look their shames upon,
They wilfully themselves exile from light,
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

Obe. But we are spirits of another sort:
I with the morning's love have oft made sport¹;

And,

⁸ — *night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,*] “The image of dragons drawing the chariot of the night is derived” (as a late writer has observed,) “from the watchfulness of that fabled animal.” *LETTERS OF LITERATURE*, 8vo. 1785.

*This circumstance Shakspeare might have learned from a passage in Golding's translation of Ovid, which he has imitated in the *Tempest*:

“Among the earth-bred brothers you a mortal war did set,

“And brought asleep the dragon fell, whose eyes were never set.”

See Vol. I. p. 88. MALONE.

⁹ — *damned spirits all,*

That in cross-ways and floods have burial,] i. e. The ghosts of self-murderers, who are buried in cross-roads; and of those who being drowned, were condemned (according to the opinion of the ancients) to wander for a hundred years, as the rites of sepulture had never been regularly bestowed on their bodies. That the waters were sometimes the place of residence for *damned spirits*, we learn from the ancient bl. l. Romance of *Syr Eglamour of Artoys*, no date:

“Let some preest a gospel saye,

“For doute of fendes in the flode.” STEEVENS.

¹ *I with the morning's love have oft made sport;*] Thus all the old copies, and I think, rightly. Tithonus was the husband of Aurora, and Tithonus was no young deity. So, in Spenser's *Fairy Queen*, b. iii. c. 3:

“As faire Aurora rising hastily,

“Doth by her blushing tell that she did lye

“All night in old Tithonus' frozen bed.”

How such a waggish spirit as the King of the Fairies might make sport with an antiquated lover, or his mistress in his absence, may be easily understood.

And, like a forester, the groves may tread,
 Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red,
 Opening on Neptune with fair blest beams,
 Turns into yellow gold his salt-green streams.
 But, notwithstanding, haste; make no delay:
 We may effect this business yet ere day.

[Exit OBERON.]

Puck. Up and down, up and down;
 I will lead them up and down:
 I am fear'd in field and town;
 Goblin, lead them up and down,

Here comes one.

Enter LYSANDER.

Lys. Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

Puck. Here, villain; drawn and ready. Where art thou?

Lys. I will be with thee straight.

Puck. Follow me then

To plainer ground. [Exit *Lys.* as following the voice.]

Enter DEMETRIUS.

Dem. Lysander? speak again.

Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?

Speak. In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?

Puck. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,
 Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,
 And wilt not come? Come, recreant; come, thou child;
 I'll whip thee with a rod: He is defil'd,
 That draws a sword on thee.

Dem. Yea; art thou there?

Puck. Follow my voice; we'll try no manhood here.

[Exit *Puck* and *Demetrius*.]

Re-enter LYSANDER.

Lys. He goes before me, and still dares me on;
 When I come where he calls, then he is gone.
 The villain is much lighter heel'd, than I:
 I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly;
 That fall'n am I in dark uneven way,
 And here will rest me. Come, thou gentle day!

[*Lies down.*]

Understood. Dr. Johnson reads with all the modern editors, "I with the
 morning light, &c." STEEVENS.

For

For if but once thou shew me thy grey light,
I'll find Demetrius, and revenge this spight. [*sleeps.*]

Re-enter PUCK and DEMETRIUS.

Puck. Ho, ho, ho! coward, why comest thou not?²

Dem. Abide me, if thou dar'st; for well I wot,
Thou runn'st before me, shifting every place;
And dar'st not stand, nor look me in the face.
Where art thou?

Puck. Come hither; I am here.

Dem. Nay, then thou mock'st me. Thou shalt buy
this dear³,

If ever I thy face by day-light see:

Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me

To measure out my length on this cold bed.—

By day's approach look to be visited. [*lies down and sleeps.*]

Enter HELENA.

Hel. O weary night, O long and tedious night,

Abate thy hours: shine, comforts, from the east;

That I may back to Athens, by day-light,

From these that my poor company detest:—

And, sleep, that sometime shuts up sorrow's eye,

Steal me a while from mine own company. [*sleeps.*]

Puck. Yet but three? Come one more;

Two of both kinds makes up four.

Here she comes, curst, and sad:—

Cupid is a knavish lad,

Thus to make poor females mad.

Enter HERMIA.

Her. Never so weary, never so in woe,

Bedabbled with the dew, and torn with briers;

I can no further crawl, no further go;

My legs can keep no pace with my desires.

Here

² Ho, ho, ho! coward, why comest thou not? It may be remarked that this exclamation is peculiar to *Puck*. In the old song printed by Peck, in which he relates all his gambols, he concludes every verse with *ho, ho!* He here forgets his assumed character. ANONYMOUS.

The song above alluded to may be found in *Percy's Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, vol. iii. p. 203. MALONE.

³ — buy this dear,] i. e. thou shalt dearly pay for this. Though this

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Here will I rest me, till the break of day.

Heavens shield Lyfander, if they mean a fray! [*lies down.*]

Puck. On the ground

Sleep sound:

I'll apply

To your eye,

Gentle lover, remedy.

[*Squeezing the juice on Lyfander's eye.*]

When thou wak'st,

Thou tak'st⁴

True delight

In the fight

Of thy former lady's eye:

And the country proverb known,

That every man should take his own,

In your waking shall be shown;

Jack shall have Jill⁵:

Nought shall go ill;

The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.

[*Exit PUCK.—DEM. HEL. &c. sleep.*]

is sense, and may well enough stand, yet the poet perhaps wrote *thou shalt* 'by it dear. So, in another place, *thou shalt* abate it. So, Milton:

"How dearly I abide that boast so vain." JOHNSON.

⁴ *When thou wak'st,*

Thou tak'st] The second line would be improved, I think, both

in its measure and construction, if it were written thus:

When thou wak'st,

See thou tak'st

True delight &c. TYRWHITT.

⁵ *Jack shall have Jill: &c.*] These three $\frac{1}{2}$ lines are to be found among Heywood's Epigrams on three hundred Proverbs. STEEVENS.

ACT IV. SCENE 1⁶.*The same.*

*Enter TITANIA, and BOTTOM, Fairies attending;
 OBERON behind, unseen.*

Tita. Come sit thee down upon this flowery bed,

While I thy amiable cheeks do coy⁷,

And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,

And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.

Bot. Where's Pease-blossom?

Pease. Ready.

Bot. Scratch my head, Pease-blossom.—Where's monsieur Cobweb?

Cob. Ready.

Bot. Monsieur Cobweb; good monsieur, get your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hip'd humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good monsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, monsieur; and, good monsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loth to have you over-flown⁸ with a honey-bag, signior.—Where's monsieur Mustard-seed?

Must. Ready.

Bot. Give me your neif⁹, monsieur Mustard-seed. Pray you, leave your courtesy, good monsieur.

Must. What's your will?

Bot. Nothing, good monsieur, but to help cavalero Cobweb¹⁰ to scratch. I must to the barber's, monsieur; for,

⁶ I see no reason why the fourth act should begin here, when there seems no interruption of the action. In the old quartos of 1600, there is no division of acts, which seems to have been afterwards arbitrarily made in the first folio, and may therefore be altered at pleasure. JOHNS.

⁷ — *do coy*,] To coy, is to sooth, to stroke. STEEVENS.

⁸ — *overflown*—] It should be *overflow'd*; but it appears from a rhyme in another play that the mistake was our author's. MALONE.

⁹ — *neif*,] i. e. first. *Henry IV.* Act II. sc. 2:

"Sweet knight, I kiss thy neif." GREY.

¹⁰ — *cavalero Cobweb*—] Without doubt it should be *Cavalero Pease-blossom*; as for *cavalero Cobweb*, he had just been dispatched upon a perilous adventure. GREY.

methinks,

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methinks, I am marvellous hairy about the face: and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me, I must scratch.

Tita. What, wilt thou hear some musick, my sweet love?

Bot. I have a reasonable good ear in musick: let us have the tongs² and the bones.

Tita. Or, say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat.

Bot. Truly, a peck of provender; I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a great desire to a bottle of hay: good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

Tita. I have a venturous fairy that shall seek The squirrel's hoard, and fetch thee new nuts.

Bot. I had rather have a handful, or two, of dried pease. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me; I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

Tita. Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms. Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away³. So doth the woodbine⁴, the sweet honey-suckle,

Gently

² — the tongs. — The old rustic music of the tongs and key. The folio has this stage direction. — "Musicke Tongs, Rurall Musicke."

STEEVENS.

³ — and be all ways away.] i. e. disperse yourselves, and scout out severally, in your watch, that danger approach us from that quarter.

THEOBALD.

The old copies read—be always. Corrected by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

⁴ So doth the woodbine, the sweet honey-suckle,

Gently entwist,—the female ivy so

Enrings, the barked fingers of the elm.] Dr. Warburton objects, that the wood-bine and the honey-suckle are the same plant, and that therefore it is absurd to make one of them entwine the other. But the interpretation of either Dr. Johnson or Mr. Steevens removes all difficulty. The following passage in *The fatal Union*, 1640, in which the honey-suckle is spoken of as the flower, and the woodbine as the plant, adds some support to Dr. Johnson's exposition:

" — as fit a gift

" As this were for a lord,—a honey-suckle,

" The amorous woodbine's offspring."

But Minshieu in v. *Woodbinde*, supposes them the same: "Alio nomine nobis Anglis Honeyfuckle dictus." If Dr. Johnson's explanation be right, there should be no point after woodbine, honey-suckle, or enrings. MALONE.

Shakspeare perhaps only meant, so the leaves involve the flower, using woodbine for the plant, and honey-suckle for the flower; or perhaps Shakspeare made a blunder. JOHNSON.

The thought is Chaucer's. See his *Troilus and Creseide*, v. 1236, l. 11.

" And as about a tre with many a twist

" Bitrent

Gently entwist,—the female ivy^s fo
 Earrings, the barky fingers of the elm.
 O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee!

[*They sleep.*]

OBERON advances. Enter PUCK.

Obe. Welcome, good Robin. See'st thou this sweet fight?
 Her dotage now I do begin to pity.
 For meeting her of late, behind the wood,
 Seeking sweet favours for this hateful fool,
 I did upbraid her, and fall out with her:
 For she his hairy temples then had rounded
 With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;
 And that in dew, which sometime on the buds
 Was wont to swell, like round and orient pearls,
 Stood now within the pretty flouret's eyes,
 Like tears, that did their own disgrace bewail.
 When I had, at my pleasure, taunted her,
 And she, in mild terms, begg'd my patience,
 I then did ask of her her changeling child;

“Bitrent and writhin is the sweet woodbine,

“Can eche of hem in armis other winde.”

What Shakspeare seems to mean, is this.—*So the woodbine, i. e. the honey-suckle, doth gently entwist the barky fingers of the elm, and so does the female ivy enring the same fingers.* It is not unfrequent in the poets, as well as other writers, to explain one word by another which is better known. The reason why Shakspeare thought *woodbine* wanted illustration, perhaps is this. In some counties, by *woodbine* or *woodbind* would have been generally understood the ivy, which he had occasion to mention in the very next line. STEEVENS.

It is certain that the *woodbine* and the *honey-suckle* were sometimes considered as different plants. But I think Mr. Steevens's interpretation the true one. The old writers did not always carry the auxiliary verb forward, as the late editor seems to have thought by his alteration of *enrings* to *enring*. So Bishop Lowth, in his excellent *Introduction to Grammar*, p. 126, has without reason corrected a similar mistake in St. Matthew. FARMER.

5 — *the female ivy*] Shakspeare calls it *female ivy*, because it always requires some support, which is poetically called its husband. So Milton:

“—led the vine

“To wed her elm: she spous'd, about him twines

“Her marriageable arms.”

Ulmo conjuncta marito. Catull.

Platanusque cælebs

Evincet ulmos. Hor. STEEVENS.

Which

Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent
 To bear him to my bower in fairy land.
 And now I have the boy, I will undo
 This hateful imperfection of her eyes.
 And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp
 From off the head of this Athenian swain;
 That he awaking when the others do,
 May all to Athens back again repair;
 And think no more of this night's accidents,
 But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
 But first I will release the fairy queen.

Be, as thou wast wont to be;

[touching her eyes with an herb.]

See, as thou wast wont to see:

Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower⁶

Hath such force and blessed power.

Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet queen.

Tita. My Oberon! what visions have I seen!

Methought, I saw a pair of an ass.

Obe. There lies your love.

Tita. How came these things to pass?

O, how mine eyes do loath his visage now!

Obe. Silence, a while.—Robin, take off this head.—

Titania, musick call; and strike more dead

'Than common sleep, of all these five the sense⁷.

Tita. Musick, ho! musick; such as charmeth sleep.

Puck. Now, when thou wak'st, with thine own fool's
 eyes peep.

Obe. Sound, musick. *[Still Musick.]* Come my queen,
 take hands with me,

And rock the ground whereof these sleepers be.

Now thou and I are new in amity;

⁶ *Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower*] The old copies read—or Cupid's. Corrected by Dr. Thirlby. The herb now employed is styled *Diana's bud*, because it is applied as an antidote to that charm which had constrained Titania to dote on Bottom with "the soul of love." MALONE.

⁷ — *all these five the sense*] The old copies read—these *five*; the *u* being accidentally reversed at the press. The emendation was made by Mr. Theobald. See Vol. I. p. 292, n. 9. MALONE.

The five that lay asleep on the stage were Demetrius, Lysander, Hermia, Helena, and Bottom. THEOBALD.

And will, to-morrow midnight, solemnly,
Dance in duke Theseus' house triumphantly,
And bless it to all fair prosperity⁸:

There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

Puck. Fairy king, attend, and mark;
I do hear the morning lark.

Obe. Then, my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after the night's shade⁹:

We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wand'ring moon.

Tit. Come, my lord; and in our flight,
Tell how it came this night,
That I sleeping here was found,
With these mortals, on the ground.

[*Exeunt.*

Horns sound within.

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLITA, EGEUS, and Train.

The. Go, one of you, find out the forester;—
For now our observation is perform'd¹.

And

⁸ — to all fair prosperity:] I have preferred this, which is the reading of the first and best quarto, printed by Fisher, to that of the other quarto and the folio, (*prosperity*,) induced by the following lines in a former scene:

“ — your warrior love

“ To Theseus must be wedded, and you come

“ To give their bed joy and prosperity.” MALONE.

⁹ *Then, my queen, in silence sad,*

Trip we after the night's shade:] *Sad* signifies grave, sober; and is opposed to their dances and revels, which were now ended at the singing of the morning lark. So *Winter's Tale*, Act IV: “My father and the gentlemen are in *sad* talk.” WARBURTON.

A statute 3 Hen. VII. c. 14, directs certain offences committed in the king's palace, to be tried by twelve *sad* men of the king's household.

BLACKSTONE.

¹ — our observation is perform'd:] The honours due to the morning of May. I know not why Shakspeare calls this play a *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, when he so carefully informs us that it happened on the night preceding May-day. JOHNSON.

The title of this play seems no more intended to denote the precise time of the action, than that of *The Winter's Tale*; which we find, was at the season of sheep-shearing. FARMER.

The same phrase has been used in a former scene:

“ To do observance to a morn of May.”

And since we have the vaward of the day,
 My love shall hear the musick of my hounds.—
 Uncouple in the western valley; go:—
 Dispatch, I say, and find the forester.—
 We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top,
 And mark the musical confusion
 Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

Hip. I was with Hercules, and Cadmus, once,
 When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear²
 With hounds of Sparta: never did I hear
 Such gallant chiding³; for, besides the groves,
 The skies, the fountains⁴, every region near
 Seem all one mutual cry: I never heard
 So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

The. My hounds are bred out of the Spartan blood⁵,

I imagine that the title of this play was suggested by the time it was first introduced on the stage, which was probably at *Midsummer*. "A Dream for the entertainment of a Midsummer-night." *Twelfth Night* and *The Winter's Tale* had probably their titles from a similar circumstance. MALONE.

² — they bay'd the bear] Thus all the old copies. And thus in Chaucer's *Knights Tale*, v. 2020, late edit:

"The hunte ystrangled with the wilde beeres." STEEVENS.

Holinshed, with whose histories our poet was well acquainted, says, "the beare is a beast commonlie hunted in the East countries." See vol. i. p. 206; and in p. 226, he says, "Alexander at vacant times hunted the tiger, the pard, the bore, and the beare." Pliny, Plutarch, &c. mention bear-hunting. Turberville, in his *Book of Hunting*, has two chapters on hunting the bear. As the persons mentioned by the poet are foreigners of the heroick strain, he might perhaps think it nobler sport for them to hunt the bear than the boar. FOLLET.

³ Such gallant chiding;] Chiding in this instance means only sound. So, in *King Henry VIII*:

"As doth a rock against the chiding flood." STEEVENS.

⁴ — for, besides the groves,

The skies, the fountains,—] Instead of *fountains*, Mr. Heath would read *mountains*. The change had been proposed to Mr. Theobald, who has well supported the old reading, by observing that Virgil and other poets have made rivers, lakes, &c. responsive to sound:

Tum vero exoritur clamor, ripæque lacusque

Responsant circa, et cælum tonat omne tumultu. MALONE.

⁵ My hounds are bred &c.] This passage has been imitated by Lee in his *Theodosius*:

"Then through the woods we chase'd the foaming boar,

"With hounds that open'd like" *æthalian* bulls;

"Line

So flew'd⁶, so fanded⁷; and their heads are hung
 With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
 Crook-knee'd, and dew-lap'd like Theſſalian bulls;
 Slow in purſuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,
 Each under each. A cry more tuneable
 Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
 In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Theſſaly:
 Judge, when you hear.—But, ſoft, what nymphs are theſe?
 Ege. My lord, this is my daughter here aſleep;
 And this, Lyſander; this Demetrius is;
 This Helena, old Nedar's Helena:
 I wonder at their being here together.
 The. No doubt, they roſe up early, to obſerve.
 The rites of May; and, hearing our intent,
 Came here in grace of our ſolemnity.—
 But, ſpeak, Egeus; is not this the day

“Like tygers flew'd, and fanded as the ſhore;

“With ears and cheſts that daſh'd the morning dew.” MALONE.

⁶ So flew'd,] *i. e.* ſo mouthed. ~~They are the large chaps of a~~
 deep-mouthed hound. HANMER.

Arthur Golding uſes this word in his tranſlation of Ovid's *Metamorphoſes*, finiſhed 1567, a book with which Shakspeare appears to have been well acquainted. The poet is deſcribing Actæon's hounds, b. iii. p. 33, b. 1603. Two of them, like our author's, were of Spartan kind; bred from a Spartan bitch and a Cretan dog:

“—with other twaine, that had a fire of Crete,

“And dam of Spart: th' one of them, called Jollyboy, a grette

And large-flew'd hound.”

Shakspeare mentions Cretan hounds (with Spartan) afterwards in this ſpeech of Theſeus. And Ovid's tranſlator, Golding, in the ſame deſcription, has them both in one verſe, *ibid.* p. 33, a:

“This latter was a hound of Crete, the other was of Spart.”

T. WARTON.

⁷ So fanded;] So marked with ſmall ſpots. JOHNSON.

Sandy'd means of a ſandy colour, which is one of the true denotements of a blood-hound. STEEVENS.

⁸ I wonder of.—] The modern editors read—I wonder at &c. But changes of this kind ought, I conceive, to be made with great caution; for the writings of our author's contemporaries furniſh us with abundant proofs that many modes of ſpeech, which now ſeem harſh to our ears, were juſtified by the phraſeology of former times. In *All's well that ends well*, we have

“—thou diſmiſt

“Of virtue, for the ſame.” MALONE.

L. 12

That

That *Hermia* should give answer of her choice?

Ege. It is: my lord.

The. Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns.
Horns, and shout within. DEMETRIUS, LYSANDER,
HERMIA, and HELENA, wake and start up.

The. Good-morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past⁹;
Begin these wood-birds but to couple now?

Lys. Pardon, my lord. [*He and she rest kneel to Theseus.*]

The. I pray you all, stand up.

I know, you two are rival enemies;

How comes this gentle concord in the world

That hatred is so far from jealousy,

To sleep by hate, and fear no enmity?

Lys. My lord, I shall reply amazedly,
Half 'sleep, half waking: But as yet, I swear,
I cannot truly say how I came here:

But, as I think, (for truly would I speak,—

And now I do bethink me, so it is;)

I came with *Hermia* hither: our intent

Was, to be gone from Athens, where we might be
Without the peril of the Athenian law.

Ege. Enough, enough, my lord; you have enough:
I beg the law, the law, upon his head.—

They would have stol'n away, they would, Demetrius,
Thereby to have defeated you and me:

You, of your wife; and me, of my consent;

Of my consent that she should be your wife.

Dem. My lord, fair Helen told me of their wealth,

Of this their purpose hither, to this wood;

And I in fury hither follow'd them;

Fair Helena in fancy following me¹.

9 — *Saint Valentine is past:* Alluding to the old saying, that birds begin to couple on St. Valentine's day. STEEVENS.

¹ *Fair Helena in fancy following me.* *Fancy* is here taken for *love* or *affection*, and is opposed to *fury*, as before:

Sighs and wars, poor Fancy's followers.

Some now call that which a man takes particular delight in, his *fancy*. *Flower-fancier*, for a florist, and *bird-fancier*, for a lover and feeder of birds, are colloquial words. JOHNSON.

So, in our author's *Rape of Lucrece*:

"A martial man to be soft *fancy's* slave!" MALONE.

Put

But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,
 (But by some power it is,) my love to Hermia,
 Mixed as doth the snow², seems to me now
 As the remembrance of an idle gawd³,
 Which in my childhood I did dote upon:
 And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
 The object, and the pleasure of mine eye,
 Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
 Was I betroth'd ere I did see⁴ Hermia:
 But, like a sickness, did I loath this food:
 But, as in health, come to my natural taste,
 Now do I love it, love it, long for it,
 And will forevermore be true to it.

Dem. For lovers, you are fortunately met:
 Of this discourse we will hear more anon.—

Egeus, I will over-bear your will;
 For in the temple, by and by with us,
 These couples shall eternally be knit.
 And, for the morning now, something worn,
 Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.—
 Away, with us, to Athens: Three and three,
 We'll hold a feast in great solemnity.—

Come, Hippolita. [*Exeunt THE. HIP. EGE. and Train.*]

Dem. These things seem small, and undistinguishable,
 Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.

Hel. Methinks I see these things with parted eye,
 When every thing seems double,

Hel. So methinks:
 And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,
 Mine own, and not mine own⁵.

Dem.

² — *as doth the snow*,] The word *doth* which seems to have been inadvertently omitted, was supplied by Mr. Capell. MALONE.

³ — *an idle gawd*,] See p. 443. n. 6. STEEVENS.

⁴ — *ere I did see*—] *Did*, which is wanting in the old copies, was supplied by Mr. Rowe. MALONE.

⁵ *And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,*

Mine own, and not mine own.] Helena, I think, means to say, that having found Demetrius unexpectedly, she considered her property in him as insecure as that which a person has in a jewel that he has found by accident; which he knows not whether he shall retain, and

Dem. Are you sure
That we are awake⁶?—it seems to me,
That yet we sleep, we dream.—Do not you think,
The duke was here, and bid us follow him?

Her. Yea; and my father.

Hel. And Hippolita.

Lys. And he did bid us follow to the temple.

Dem. Why then, we are awake: let's follow him;
And, by the way, let us recount our dreams. [*Exeunt.*]

As they go out, Bottom awakes.

Bot. When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer:
—my next is, *Most fair Pyramus*.—Hey, ho!—Peter
Quince! Flute, the bellows-mender! Snout, the tinker!
Starveling! God's my life! stolen hence, and left me
asleep! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a
dream,—past the wit of man to say what dream it was:
Man is but an ass, if he go about to expound this dream.
Methought I was—there is no man can tell what. Me-
thought I was, and methought I had,—But man is but a
patch'd fool⁷; if he will offer to say what methought I
had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man
hath not seen; man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue
to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was.
I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream:
it shall be call'd Bottom's Dream, because it hath no

which therefore may properly enough be called *his own* and not *her own*.
She does not say, as Dr. Warburton has represented, that *Demetrius was*
like a jewel, but that she had found him, like a jewel, &c.

A kindred thought occurs in *Antony and Cleopatra*.

“ — by starts,

“ His fretted fortunes give him hope and fear

“ *Of what he has, and has not.*”

The same kind of expression is found also in *The Merchant of Venice*:

“ Where every something, being blent together,

“ Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy,

“ *Express, and not express.*” MALONE.

⁶ *Are you sure*

That we are awake?] *Sure* is here used as a dissyllable: so *fire*,
fire, hour, &c. The word *now* [That we are now awake?] seems to be
wanting, to complete the metre of the next line. MALONE.

⁷ — *patch'd fool*,] That is, a fool in a party-colour'd coat. JOHNSON.

Bottom; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the duke: Peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death^s. [Exit.

S C E N E II.

Athens. *A Room in Quince's House.*

Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOOT, and STARVELLING.

Quin. Have you sent to Bottom's house? is he come home yet?

Star. He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt, he is transported.

Flu. If he come not, then the play is marr'd; It goes not for^s. doth it?

Quin. It is not possible: you have not a man in all Athens, able to discharge Pyramus, but he.

Flu. No; he hath simply the best wit of any handy-craft man in Athens.

Quin. Yea, and the best person^s; and he is a very paramour, for a sweet voice.

Flu. You must say, paragon: a paramour is, God bless us! a thing of nought⁹.

Enter SNUG.

Snug. Masters, the duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married: if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men^s.

^s — at her death.] He means the death of Thisbe, which is what his head is at present lost of. STEEVENS.

Theobald reads—after death. He might have quoted the following passage in the *Tempest* in support of his emendation. "This is a very scurvy tune (says Trinculo,) for a man to sing at his funeral."—Yet I believe the text is right. MALONE.

⁹ — a thing of nought.] This Mr. Theobald changes with great pomp to a thing of naught; i. e. a good for nothing thing. JOHNSON.

A thing of nought is the true reading. So in *Hamlet*:

"Ham. The king is a thing—

"Guil. A thing, my lord?

"Ham. Of nothing."

See the note on this passage. STEEVENS.

^s — made men.] In the same sense as in the *Tempest*, "any monster in England makes a man." JOHNSON.

Flu. O sweet bully Bottom! Thus hath he lost five-pence a-day during his life; he could not have 'scav'd six-pence a-day: an the duke had not given him five-pence a-day for playing Pyramus, I'll be hang'd; he would have deserv'd it: six-pence a-day, in Pyramus, or nothing.

Enter BOTTOM.

Bot. Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

Quin. Bottom!—O most courageous day! O most happy hour!

Bot. Masters, I am to discourse wonders. But ask me not what; for, if I tell you, I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing, right as it fell out.

Quin. Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

Bot. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you, is, that the duke hath din'd: Get your apparel together; good strings to your beards² new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for, the short and the long is, our play is preferr'd³. In any case, let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him, that plays the lion, pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most de^r actors, eat no onions, nor garlick, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words; away; go, away. [*Exeunt.*]

² — good strings^{to} to your beards] i. e. to prevent the hair of the beards, which they were to wear, from falling off. MALONE

³ — our play is preferr'd.] This word is not to be understood in its most common acceptation here, as if their play was chosen in preference to the others; (for that appears afterwards not to be the fact:) but means, that it was given in among others for the duke's option. So, in *Julius Cæsar* Decius, says,

"Where is Metellus Cimber? Let him go

"And presently prefer his suit to Cæsar." THEOBALD.

ACT V. SCENE I.

The same. An Apartment in the Palace of Theseus.

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLITA, PHILOSTRATE, Lords, and Attendants.

Hip. 'Tis strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.

The. More strange than true. I never may believe

These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.

Lovers, and madmen, have such seething brains¹,

Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend

More than our reason ever comprehends.

The lunatic, the lover, and the poet²,

Are of imagination all compact³:

One sees more devil than vast hell can hold;

That is, the madman: the lover, all as frantick,

Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling⁴,

Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;

And, as imagination bodies forth

The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen

Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing

A local habitation, and a name.

[— *such seething brains,*] We meet with the same expression in *The Winter's Tale*: "Would any but these boil'd brains of three and twenty hunt this rather?" MALONE.

² *The lunatic, the lover, and the poet,*] An ingenious modern writer supposes that our author had here in contemplation Orestes, Mark Antony, and himself; but I do not recollect any passage in his works that shows him to have been acquainted with the story of Agamemnon's son,—*scelerum furis agitatus Orestes*: and indeed, if even such were found, the supposed allusion would still remain very problematical.

MALONE.

³ *Are of imagination all compact,*] i. e. made up of mere imagination. So, in *As you like it*:

"If he, compact of jars, grow musical." STEEVENS.

⁴ — *in a fine frenzy rolling,*] This seems to have been imitated by Drayton in his *Epistle to J. Reynolds on Poets and Poetry*: describing Marlowe, he says,

"— that fine madness still he did retain,

"Which rightly should possess a poet's brain." MALONE.

Such

Such tricks hath strong imagination;
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
Or, in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear?

Hip. But all the story of the night told over,
And all their minds transfigur'd so together,
More witnesseth than fancy's images,
And grows to something of great constancy;
But, howsoever, strange, and admirable.

Enter LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA, and
HELENA.

The. Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth.—
Joy, gentle friends! joy, and fresh days of love,
Accompany your hearts!

Lys. More than to us
Wait on⁶ your royal walks, your board, your bed!
The. Come now, what masks, what dances shall we have,
To wear away this long age of three hours,
Between our after-supper, and bed-time?
Where is our usual manager of mirth?
What revels are in hand? Is there no play,
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?
Call Philostrate⁷.

Philostr. Here, mighty Theseus.

The. Say, what abridgement⁸ have you for this evening?
What mask? what musick? How shall we beguile
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

⁵ — constancy;] Consistency, stability, certainty. JOHNSON.

⁶ Wait on—] The old copies have—wait in. Corrected by Mr. Rowe. MALONE.

⁷ Call Philostrate.] In the *Knights' Tale* of Chaucer, Arcite, under the name of Philostrate, is squire of the chamber to Theseus. STEEV.

⁸ Say, what abridgement &c.] By abridgement our author means a dramatick performance, which crowds the events of years into a few hours. So, in *Hamlet*, Act. II. sc. vii. he calls the players "abridgements, abstracts, and brief chronicles of the time." Again, in *K. Hen. V.*

"Then brook abridgement; and your yes advance

"After your thoughts, STEEV.

Philostr.

Philost. There is a brief⁹, how many sports are ripe;
[giving a paper.]

Make choice of which your highness will see first.

The. *The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung* [reads.]
By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.

We'll none of that: that have I told my love,
In glory of my kinsman Hercules.

The riot of the Pipsy Bacchanals,
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.

That is an old device; and it was play'd
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.

The thrice three Muses mourning for the death
Of learning, late deceas'd in beggary¹.

That is some satire, keen, and critical²,
Not stuffing with a nuptial ceremony.

A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus,
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.

Merry and tragical³? Tedious and brief?
That is, hot ice, and wonderous strange snow⁴.

Philost.

⁹ — a brief,] i. e. a short account or enumeration. STEEVENS.

¹ *The thrice three Muses mourning for the death*

Of learning, &c.] I do not know whether it has been observed, that Shakspeare here, perhaps, alluded to Spenser's poem, entitled *The Tears of the Muses*, on the neglect and contempt of learning. This piece first appeared in quarto, with others, 1598. T. WARTON.

This pretended title of a dramatic performance might be designed as a covert stroke of satire on those who had permitted Spenser to die through absolute want of bread, in the year 1598:—"late deceas'd in beggary," seems to refer to this circumstance. STEEVENS.

If such an allusion was intended, this passage must have been added after the original appearance of this play; for we know that it was written in or before the year 1598, and Spenser did not die till 1599.

MALONE.

² — keen and critical,] *Critical* here means criticizing, censuring. So in *Othello*: "O, I am nothing if not critical." STEEVENS.

³ *Merry and tragical?*—] Our poet is still harping on *Cambyse*.

STEEVENS.

⁴ *That is, hot ice, and wonderous strange snow.]* Mr. Upton reads, not improbably:

— and wonderous strange black snow. JOHNSON.

I think the passage needs no change on account of the versification; for *wonderous* is as often used as *three*, as it is as *two* syllables. The meaning

How shall we find the concord of this discord?

Philost. A play there is, my lord, some ten words long;
Which is as brief as I have known a play;
But by ten words, my lord, it is too long;
Which makes it tedious: for in all the play
There is not one word apt, one player fitted,
And tragical, my noble lord, it is;
For Pyramus therein doth kill himself.
Which, when I saw rehears'd, I must confess,
Made mine eyes water; but more merry tears
The passion of loud laughter never shed.

The. What are they, that do play it?

Philost. Hard-handed men, that work in Athens here,
Which never labour'd in their minds till now;
And now have toil'd their unbreath'd memories
With this same play against your nuptial.

The. And we will hear it.

Philost. No, my noble lord,
It is not for you: I have heard it over,
And it is nothing, nothing in the world;
Unless you can find sport in their intents,
Extremely stretch'd, and conn'd with cruel aim,
To do you service.

The. I will hear that play:
For never any thing can be amiss,
When simpleness and duty tender it.

meaning of the line is—"That is, *hot ice* and snow, *is strange a quality*." STEEVENS.

As there is no antithesis between *strange* and *snow*, as there is between *hot* and *ice*, I believe we should read—"and wondrous *strong* snow."

MASON.

In support of Mr. Mason's conjecture it may be observed that the words *strong* and *strange* are often confounded in our old plays. MALONE.
5 — unbreath'd memories] That is, unexercised, unpractised memories. STEEVENS.

6 Unless you can find sport in their intents,] Thus all the copies. But as I know not what it is to *stretch* and *conn* an *intent*, I suspect a line to be lost. JOHNSON.

To *intend* and to *attend* were anciently synonymous. Of this use several instances are given in a note on the third scene of the first act of *Othello*. *Intents* therefore may be put for the objects of their *attention*. We still say a person is *intent* on his business. STEEVENS.

Co,

Go, bring them in ;—and take your places, ladies.

[Exit PHILOSTRATE.]

Hip. I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharg'd,
And duty in his service perishing.

The. Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

Hip. He says, they can do nothing in this kind.

The. The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
Our sport shall be⁷, to take what they mistake :

And what poor duty cannot do⁸,

Noble respect takes it in might, not merit⁹.

Where I have come, great clerks have purposed

To greet me¹⁰ with premeditated welcomes ;

Where I have seen them shiver, and look pale,

Make periods in the midst of sentences,

Threaten their practis'd accent in their fears,

And, in conclusion, dumbly have broke off¹¹,

Not paying me a welcome : Trust me, sweet,

Out of this silence, yet, I pick'd a welcome ;

And in the modesty of fearful duty

I read as much, as from the rattling tongue

⁷ *Our sport shall be, &c.*] Voltaire says something like this of Louis XIV. who took a pleasure in seeing his courtiers in confusion when they spoke to him. STEEVENS.

⁸ *And what poor duty cannot do,*] The defective metre of this line shews that some word was inadvertently omitted by the transcriber or compositor. Mr. Theobald supplied the defect by reading "And what poor ~~would~~ duty, &c." MALONE.

⁹ *And what poor duty cannot do,*

Noble respect takes it in might, not merit.] And what dutifulness tries to perform without ability, regardful generosity receives with complacency, estimating it not by the actual merit of the performance, but by what it might have been, were the abilities of the performers equal to their zeal.—Such, I think, is the true interpretation of this passage ; for which the reader is indebted partly to Dr. Johnson, and partly to Mr. Steevens. MALONE.

¹⁰ *Where I have come, great clerks have purposed—*

And in conclusion dumbly have broke off,] So, in *Pericles*, 1609 :

"She sings like one immortal, and she dances

"As goddess like to her admired lays ;

"Deep clerks she dumbs."

It should be observed, that *periods* in the text is used in the sense of full points. MALONE.

Of sawcy and audacious eloquence.
Love, therefore, and tongue-ty'd simplicity,
In least, speak most, to my capacity.

Enter PHILOSTRATE.

Philost. So please your grace, the prologue is address'd.
The. Let him approach. [*Trumpets sound*].

Enter Prologue.

Prol. If we offend, it is with our good will.
That you should think, we come not to offend
But with good will. To show our simple *skits*,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then, we come but in despite.
We do not come, as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight,
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand; and by their show,
You shall know all, that you are like to know.

The. This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Lys. He hath rid his prologue, like a rough colt; he
knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord: It is not
enough to speak, but to speak true.

Hip. Indeed he hath play'd on this prologue, like a
child on a recorder; a sound, but not in government.

The. His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing un-
pair'd, but all disorder'd. Who is next?

Enter

² — address.] That is, ready. So, in *K. Henry V.*

"To-morrow for our march we are address'd." STEEVENS.

³ *Trumpets sound.*] It appears from the *Guls Hornbook* by Decker, 1609, that the prologue was anciently usher'd in by trumpets. "Present not yourselfe on the stage (especially at a new play) untill the quaking prologue hath (by rubbing) got colour in his cheeks, and is ready to give the trumpets their cue that hee's up to point to enter." STEEVENS.

⁴ — a recorder;] A kind of flute. Shakspeare introduces it in *Hamlet*; and Milton, says:

"To the sound of soft recorders."

This instrument is mentioned in many of the old plays. STEEVENS.

Sir John Hawkins supposes it to have been a *Wglet*. MALONE.

⁵ — but not in government.] That is, not regularly, according to the tune. STEEVENS.

Hamlet

*Enter PYRAMUS and THISBE, Wall, Moonshine, and Lion, as in dumb show*⁶.

- Prol.* "Gentles, perchance, you wonder at this show;
 "But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.
 "This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
 "This beauteous lady Thisby is; certain.
 "This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
 "Wall, that vile wall which did these lovers sunder:
 "And through wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
 "To whisper; at the which let no man wonder.
 "This man, with lantern, dog, and bush of thorn,
 "Present the moon-shine: for, if you will know,
 "By moon-shine did these lovers think no scorn
 "To meet at Ninus' tomb⁷, there, there to woo.
 "This grisly beast, which by name lion hight⁸,
 "The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,
 "Did scare away, or rather did affright:
 "And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall⁹;
 "Which lion vile with bloody mouth did stain:
 "Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth, and tall,
 "And finds his trusty Thisby's mantle slain:

Hamlet speaking of a recorder, says, "*Govern* these ventages with your fingers and thumb, breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most elegant musick." This explains the meaning of *government* in this passage. MASON.

⁶ In this place the folio, 1623, exhibits the following prompter's direction. *To enter with a trumpet before them.* STEEVENS.

⁷ *To meet at Ninus' tomb, &c.*] So, in Chaucer's *Legend of Thisbe of Babylon*:

"Thei settin markes ther metingis should be,
 "There king *Ninus* was graven undir a tre."

Again: "And as she ran her *wimple* she let fall." STEEVENS.

⁸ — *which by name lion hight,*] *Hight*, in old English signifies—is called. The old copies read—*which lion hight by name*. The present regulation was made by Mr. Theobald. I think it more probable that a line, following the words—*by night*, has been lost. MALONE.

⁹ — *her mantle she did fall;*] *To fall* in this instance is a verb active. So, in the *Tempest*, Act II. sc. i:

"And what I rear my hand, do you the like,
 "To fall it on *Gonzalo*." STEEVENS.

"Whereat

- "Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,"
 "He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast ;"
 "And, Thibby tarrying in mulberry shade,
 "His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,
 "Let lion, moon-shine, wall, and lovers twain,
 "At large discourse, while here they do remain."

[*Exeunt* Prol. *THISBE*, *Lion*, and *Moonshine*.]

The. I wonder, if the lion be to speak.

Dem. No wonder, my lord : one lion may, when many asses do.

- Wall.* "In this same interlude, it doth fall,
 "That I, one Snout by name, present a wall :
 "And such a wall, as I would have you think,
 "That had in it a cranny'd hole, or chink,
 "Through which the lovers, *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*,
 "Did whisper often very secretly."
 "This lome, this rough-cast, and this stone, doth show
 "That I am that same wall ; the truth is so :
 "And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
 "Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper."

The. Would you desire lime and hair to speak better ?

Dem. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord.

The. *Pyramus* draws near the wall : silence !

Enter PYRAMUS.

Pyr. "O grim-look'd night ! O night with hue so black !

"O night, which ever art, when day is not !

"O night, O night, alack, alack, alack,

"I fear my *Thisbe*'s promise is forgot !—

¹ *Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,* Mr. Upton rightly observes, that Shakspeare in this line ridicules the affectation of beginning many words with the same letter. He might have remarked the same of

The raging rocks

And shivering shocks.

Gascoigne, contemporary with our poet, remarks and blames the same affectation. JOHNSON.

" And

- " And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
 " That stand'st between her father's ground and mine;
 " Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
 " Shew me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne.

[Wall holds up his fingers.]

- " Thanks, courteous wall: Jove shield thee well for this!

" But what see I? No Thisby do I see.

- " O wicked wall², through whom I see no blifs;

" Curst be thy stones for thus deceiving me!"

Thbe. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

Pyr. No, in truth, fir, he should not. *Deceiving me,* is Thisby's cur; she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will fall pat as I told you:—Yonder she comes.

Enter THISBE.

Thisb. " O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,

" For parting my fair Pyramus and me:

- " My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones

" Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee."

Pyr. " I see a voice: now will I to the chink,

" To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face.

- " Thisby!"

Thisb. " My love! thou art my love, I think."

Pyr. " Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace;

- " And like Limander am I trusty still³."

Thisb. " And I like Helen, till the fates me kill."

Pyr. " Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true."

Thisb. " As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you."

Pyr. " O, kiss me through the whole of this vile wall."

Thisb. " I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all."

Pyr. " Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straight-
 " way?"

Thisb. " Tide life, tide death, I come without delay."

² *O wicked wall, &c.*] So, in Chaucer's *Legend of Thisbe*:

" Thus would thei saine, alas! thou wicked wal, &c." STEEV.

³ *And like Limander, &c.*] Limander and Helen, are spoken by the blundering player, for Leander and Hero. Shafalus and Procrus, for Cephalus and Procris. JOHNSON.

Wall. "Thus have I wall my part discharged so;
 "And, being done, thus wall away doth go."

[*Exeunt Wall, PYRAMUS, and THISBE.*]

The. Now is the mural ⁴ down between the two neighbours.

Dem. No remedy, my lord, when walls are so wilful to hear without warning ⁵.

Hip. This is the filiest stuff that ever I heard.

The. The best in this kind are but shadows: and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend ⁶ them.

Hip. It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

The. If we imagine no worse of them, than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion ⁶.

Enter Lion and Moonshine.

Lion. "You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
 "The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
 "May now, perchance, both quake and tremble here,
 "When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar."

⁴ — the mural—] Old Copies—*mural*. Corrected by Mr. Theobald. MALONE.

⁵ — when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.] This alludes to the proverb, "*Walls have ears.*" A wall between almost any two neighbours would soon be down, where it to exercise this faculty without previous warning. FARMER.

⁶ — a man, and a lion.] Mr. Theobald reads—a moon and a lion, and the emendation was adopted by the subsequent editors; but, I think, without necessity. The conceit is furnished by the person who represents the lion, and enters covered with the hide of that beast; and Theseus only means to say, that the man who represented the moon, and came in at the same time, with a lantern in his hand, and a bush of thorns at his back, was as much a beast as he who performed the part of the lion. MALONE.

The man in the moon was no new character on the stage, and is here introduced in ridicule of such exhibitions. Ben Jonson in one of his masques, call'd, *News from the New World in the Moon*, makes his Faëtor doubt of the person who brings the intelligence. "I must see his dog at his girdle, and the bush of thorns at his back, ere I believe it."—"Those", replies one of the heralds, "are *scale ensigns of the stage.*" FARMER.

Then know, that I, one Snug the joiner, am

A lion fell, nor else no lion's dam :

For if I should as lion come in strife

Into this place, 'twere pity on my life."

The. A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.

Dem. The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.

Lys. This lion is a very fox for his valour.

The. True ; and a goose for his discretion.

Dem. Not so, my lord : for his valour cannot carry his discretion ; and the fox carries the goose.

The. His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour ; for the goose carries not the fox. It is well : leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

Moon. " This lantern doth the horned moon present ;"

Dem. He should have worn the horns on his head.

The. He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible within the circumference.

Moon. " This lantern doth the horned moon present ;

" Myself the man i'th' moon do seem to be."

The. This is the greatest error of all the rest : the man should be put into the lantern ; how is it else the man i'th' moon ?

Dem. He dares not come there for the candle : for, you see, it is already in snuff*.

Hip. I am weary of this moon : Would, he would change !

The. It appears, by this small light of discretion, that he is in the wane : but yet, in courtesy, in all reason, we must stay the time.

Lys. Proceed, moon,

⁷ Then know, that I, one Snug the joiner, am

A lion fell, nor else no lion's dam : } That is, that I am Snug the joiner ; and neither a lion, nor a lion's dam. Dr. Johnson has justly observed in a note on *All's well that ends well*, that *nor* in the phraseology of our author's time often related to two members of a sentence, though only expressed in the latter. So in the play just mentioned :

" — contempt nor bitterness

" Were in his pride or sharpness."

The reading of the text is that of the folio. The quartos read—that I, as Snug the joiner, &c. MALONE.

* — in snuff.] An equivocation. *Snuff* signifies both the cinder of a candle, and hasty anger. JOHNSON.

Moon. All that I have to say, is, to tell you, that the
lanthorn is the moon; I, the man in the moon; this
thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

Dem. Why, all these should be in the lanthorn; for
they are in the moon. But, silence; here comes Thisbe.

Enter THISBE.

Thisb. "This is old Ninny's tomb: Where is my love?"

Lion. "Oh.—" [*The lion roars. Thisbe runs off.*]

Dem. Well roar'd, lion.

The. Well run, Thisbe.

Hip. Well shone, moon.—Truſy, the moon shines with
a good grace.

The. Well mous'd, lion. [*The Lion tears Thisbe's mantle.*]

Dem. And then came Pyramus.

Enter PYRAMUS.

Lyf. And ſo the lion vaniſh'd.¹ [*Exit Lion.*]

Pyr. "Sweet moon, I thank thee for thy ſunny beams;

"I thank thee, moon, for ſhining now ſo bright:

"For by thy gracious, golden, glittering ſtreams²,

"I truſt to taſte of trueſt Thisbe's ſight.

"But ſtay;—O ſpight!

"But mark;—Poor knight,

"What dreadful dole is here?

"Eyes, do you ſee?

"How can it be?

"O dainty duck! O dear!

"Thy mantle good,

"What, ſtain'd with blood?

"Approach, ye furies fell!

¹ *Well mous'd, lion.*] Theſeus means that he has well tumbled and
bloody'd the veil of Thisbe. STEEVENS.

² *And then came Pyramus.*

And ſo the lion vaniſh'd.] Dr. Farmer would read—

And ſo comes Pyramus,

And then the moon vaniſhes. MALONE.

² — *glittering ſtreams.*] The old copies read—*beams.* STEEVENS.

The emendation was made by the editor of the ſecond folio. MALONE.

"O fates!

" O fates! come, come;

" Cut thread and thrum³;

" Quail, crush, conclude, and quell⁴!"

The. This passion, and the death of a dear friend,
would go near to make a man look sad.

Hip. Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

Pyr. " O, wherefore nature didst thou lions frame?

" Since lion⁵ vile hath here deslour'd my dear:

" Which is—no, no—which was the fairest dame,

" That liv'd, that lov'd, that lik'd, that look'd, with

" ~~she~~."

" Come, tears, confound;

" Out, sword, and wound

" The pap of Pyramus;

" Ay, that left pap,

" Where heart doth hop:—

" Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

" Now am I dead,

" Now am I fled;

" My soul is in the sky:

" Tongue, lose thy light!

" Moon, take thy flight!

" Now die, die, die, die, die. [*dies. Exit Moonshine.*

Dem. No die, but an ace, for him; for he is but one.

Lys. Less than an ace, man; for he is dead; he is no-
thing.

The. With the help of a surgeon, he might yet recover,
and prove an ass⁵.

Hip. How chance moonshine is gone, before Thisbe
comes back and finds her lover?

³ *Cut thread and thrum;*] *Thrum* is the end or extremity of a weaver's warp; it is popularly used for very coarse yarn. The maids now call a mop of yarn a *thrum mop*. WARNER.

⁴ — *and quell!*] To *quell* is to murther, to destroy. STEEVENS.

⁵ — *and prove an ass.*] The character of Theseus throughout this play is more exalted in its humanity, than its greatness. Though some sensible observations on life, and animated descriptions fall from him, as it is said of Jago, *you shall taste him more as a soldier than as a wit*, which is a distinction he is here striving to deserve, though with little success; as in support of his pretensions he never rises higher than a pun, and frequently sinks as low as a quibble. STEEVENS.

The.

The. She will find him by star light.—Here she comes.

Enter THISBE.

and her passion ends the play.

Hip. Methinks, she should not use a long one, for such a Pyramus: I hope, she will be brief.

Dem. A moth will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better⁶.

Lys. She hath spied him already, with those sweet eyes.

Dem. And thus she moans⁷, *videlicet*.—

This. “Asleep, my love?

“What, dead, my dove?

“O Pyramus, arise,

“Speak, speak. *Quite dumb?*

“Dead, dead? A tomb

“Must cover thy sweet eyes.

“These lilly lips,

“This cherry nose⁸,

“These yellow cowslip cheeks,

* The first quarto makes this speech a little longer, but not better.

The passage omitted is,—“He for a man, God warn’d us; she for a woman, God bless us.” *JOHNSON.*
STEEVENS.

⁷ And thus she moans,—] The old copies read—*means*. Corrected by Mr. Theobald. A late writer contends for the old reading, which, he says, is a common term in the Scotch law, signifying to *sell*, to *rehearse*, to *declare*. “Petitions to the lords of session in Scotland run, To the lords of council and session humbly *means* and shews your petitioner.” *Letters of Literature*, 8vo. 1785. *MALONE.*

⁸ These lilly lips, this cherry nose,] It should be:

“These lips lilly,

“This nose cherry.”

This mode of position adds not a little to the burlesque of the passage.

FARMER.

Mr. Theobald for the sake of rhyme would read—lilly *brows*. But *lips* could scarcely have been mistaken by either the eye or the ear for *brows*. *MALONE.*

We meet with somewhat like this passage in George Peele's *Old Wives Tale*, 1595:

Her coral lippes, her crimson chinne,

Thou art a flouting knave—Her coral lippes, her crimson chinne!

STEEVENS.

“Are

- " Are gone, are gone :
 " Lovers, make moan !
 " His eyes were green as leeks,
 " O sisters three,
 " Come, come, to me,
 " With hands as pale as milk ;
 " Lay them in gore,
 " Since you have shore
 " With shears his thread of silk.
 " Tongue, not a word :—
 " Come, trusty sword ;
 " Come, blade, my breast imbrue ?
 " And farewell, friends ;—
 " Thus Thisby ends :
 " Adieu, adieu, adieu."

[*dies.*]

The. Moonshine and lion are left to bury the dead.

Dem. Ay, and wall too.

Bot. No, I assure you ; the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance⁹, between two of our company.

The. No epilogue, I pray you ; for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse ; for when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it, had play'd Pyramus, and hang'd himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy : and so it is, truly ; and very notably discharg'd. But come, your Bergomask : let your epilogue alone.

[*Here a dance of clowns.*]

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve :—

Lovers, to bed ; 'tis almost fairy time.

I fear, we shall out-sleep the coming morn,

As much as we this night have overwatch'd.

This palpable-gross play hath well beguil'd

The heavy gait¹ of night.—Sweet friends, to bed.

⁹ — a *Bergomask dance*,] Sir Thomas Hanmer observes in his *Glossary*, that this is a dance after the manner of the peasants of *Bergomasco*, a country in Italy, belonging to the Venetians. All the buffoons in Italy affect to imitate the ridiculous jargon of that people ; and from thence it became also a custom to imitate their manner of dancing. STEEV.

¹ — *gait*] i. e. *passage, progress*. STEEVENS.

A fortnight hold we this solemnity,
In nightly revels, and new jollity.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The same.

Enter Puck.

Puck. Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf howls the moon²;
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
All with weary task fordone³.

² *And the wolf howls the moon;*] The old copies read—*beholds* the moon. The emendation was made by Dr. Warburton. The word *beholds* was in the time of Shakespeare frequently written *beboulds*, (as, I suppose, it was then pronounced,) which probably occasioned the mistake. The following passage in Marston's *Antonio's Revenge*, 1602, which (as Mr. Theobald has likewise observed) seems to have been copied from that before us, appears to me a strong confirmation of the reading suggested by Dr. Warburton:

“ Now *barks* the wolfe against the full-cheek'd moon,
“ Now Lyons half-clam'd entrails roar for food,
“ Now croake the toad, and night-crows screech aloud,
“ Lur'ring 'bout casements of departing souls;
“ Now *gape* the graves, and thro' their yawns let loose
“ Imprison'd spirits to revisit earth.”

It is observable, that in the passage in Lodge's *Rosalinde*, 1592, which Shakespeare seems to have had in his thoughts, when he wrote, in *As you like it*,—“ 'Tis like the howling of Irish wolves against the moon,”—the expression is found; that Marston has here used instead of *beboulds*. “ In courting Phebe, thou *barkest* with the wolves of Syria against the moon.”

These lines also in Spenser's *Faery Queen*. B. I. C. 5. st. 30. which Shakespeare might have remembered, add support to the emendation now made:

“ And all the while she [*Night*] stood upon the ground,
“ The wakeful dogs did never cease to bay;—
“ The messenger of death, the ghastly owle,
“ With dreary shrieks did also her bewray;
“ And hungry wolves continually did howle
“ At her abhorred face, so filthy and so fowle.” MALONE.

I think, *Now the wolf howls the moon*, was the original text. The allusion is frequently met with in the works of our author, and his contemporaries. “ 'Tis like the howling of Irish wolves against the moon,” says he, in *As you like it*. FARMER.

3 — *fordone.*] i. e. overcome. STEEVENS.

Now

MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM.

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Now the wasted brands do glow,
 Whilst the scritch-owl, scritch'ing loud,
 Puts the wretch, that lies in woe,
 In remembrance of a shroud.
 Now it is the time of night,
 That the graves, all gaping wide,
 Every one lets forth his spright,
 In the church-way paths to glide:
 And we fairies, that do run
 By the triple Hecate's team,
 From the presence of the sun,
 Following darkness like a dream,
 Now are frolick; not a mouse
 Shall disturb this hallow'd house:
 I am sent, with broom, before,⁴
 To sweep the dust behind the door.

Enter OBERON and TITANIA, with their Train.

Obe. Through the house give glimmering light⁵,

By the dead and drowsy fire:

Every elf and fairy sprite,

Hop as light as bird from brier;

And this ditty, after me,

Sing, and dance it trippingly.

Tita. First, rehearse this song by rote:

To each word a warbling note,

Hand in hand, with fairy grace,

Will we sing, and bless this place.

⁴ *I am sent with broom, before,*

To sweep the dust behind the door.] Cleanliness is always necessary to invite the residence and the favour of fairies:

"These make our girls their slutt'ry rue,

"By pincking them both black and blue,

"And put a penny in their shoe,

"The house for cleanly sweeping. Drayton. JOHNSON.

To sweep the dust behind the door is a common expression, and a common practice in large, old houses; where the doors of halls and galleries are thrown backward, and seldom or never shut. FARMER.

⁵ *Through the house give glimmering-light,*] Milton perhaps had this picture in his thought:

"Glowing embers through the room

"Teach light to counterfeit a gloom." Il Penseroso. JOHNSON.

SONG⁶, and DANCE.

Obe. Now, until the break of day
 Through this house each fairy stray.
 To the best bride-bed will we,
 Which by us shall blessed be ;
 And the issue, there create,
 Ever shall be fortunate.
 So shall all the couples three
 Ever true in loving be :
 And the blots of nature's hand
 Shall not in their issue stand ;
 Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,
 Nor mark prodigious⁷ such as are^{u b}
 Despised in nativity,
 Shall upon their children be.
 With this field-dew consecrate,
 Every fairy take his gait⁸ ;
 And each several chamber blest,
 Through this palace, with sweet peace :
 E'er shall it in safety rest,
 And the owner of it blest.

Trip away ;

Make no stay ;

Meet me all by break of day.

[*Exeunt* OBERON, TITANIA, and *Train*.

Puck. *If we shadows have offended,
 Think but this, (and all is mended,)
 That you have but slumber'd here,
 While these visions did appear,*

⁶ This song, like many others, is lost. Dr. Johnson thinks that another song has also been lost, which he supposes to have been sung by Oberon, immediately after his first speech on his entrance :

And this ditty, after me,

Sing, and dance it trippingly. MALONE.

⁷ Nor mark prodigious,] *Prodigious* has here its primitive signification of portentous. So, in *K. Richard III.*

" If ever he have child, abortive be it,

" *Prodigious*, and untimely brought to light." STEEVENS.

⁸ — take his gait ;] i. e. take his way, or direct his steps. STEEV.

*And this weak and idle theme,
 No more yielding but a dream,
 Gentles, do not reprehend;
 If you pardon, we will mend.
 And as I'm an honest Puck⁹,
 If we have unearned luck¹
 Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue²,
 We will make amends, ere long:
 Else the Puck a liar call.
 So, good night unto you all.
 Give me your hands³, if we be friends;
 And Robin shall restore amends.*

[Exit⁴.

9 — an honest Puck,] The propriety of this epithet has been already shewn in p. 460, n. 7. MALONE.

1 — unearned luck] i. e. if we have better fortune than we have deserved. STEEVENS.

2 Now to 'scape the serpent's tongue,] That is, if we be dismissed without hisses. JOHNSON.

3 Give me your hands,—] That is, Clap your hands. Give us your applause. JOHNSON.

So in J. Markham's *English Arcadia*, 1607:

“ But thenymph, after the custom of distressed tragedians, whose first act is entertained with a *snaky* salutation, &c. STEEVENS.”

4 Wild and fantastical as this play is, all the parts in their various modes are well written, and give the kind of pleasure which the author designed. Fairies in his time were much in fashion; common tradition had made them familiar, and Spenser's poem had made them great. JOHNSON.

THE END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.